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SPORT

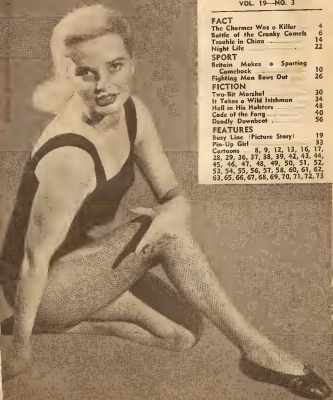
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The charmer was a

KILLER

Only insistence of a woman brought about the discovery that Helmuth Schmidt was a murderer.

By JAMES HOLLEDGE • FACT

HELMUTH SCHMIDT was tall, well-built and good-looking. His hair, parted slickly in the center, was a delicate brown with a wave that made women jealous. His moustache was a treasured thing of honey beauty that had taken years of devoted cultivation.

Few could deny that Helmuth Schmidt was handsome. He was also cruel, calculating and possessed of an unquenchable egotism hunger that led him down the path of multiple marriage and murder—the path of the Blackboard that so often leads to an appointment with the executioner.

Not many Blackboards had much claim to brains or looks. They are almost invariably crude, clumsy sadists whose end is inevitable. Hel-

mut Schmidt was different in that he was clever, cool-headed and efficient. He was able to bluff his way out of danger with the confidence of a super-villain.

His victims were not middle-aged plain women groping at an almost unbelievable chance of the matrimony for which they had almost abandoned hope. They were always young and pretty, sometimes in love with the handsome German lutherie. One glance from his drop-set, brooding eyes made their hearts beat faster, and all their will-power, determination and common sense dissolve into weak surrender.

On the morning of the day Helmuth Schmidt had earmarked as the last on earth for his second wife, he rose early in his home at

Lakewood, New Jersey. He had an important letter to write to the woman he had singled out as the third Mrs. Schmidt—or rather as the first Mrs. Snow Brown, which was the name by which she knew him.

Schmidt shaved with the precision almost of some portrait painter at work on a masterpiece, brushing his hair with the regular 150 even strokes he gave it twice daily to preserve its luster and growth, and tracing his moustache with the meticulous attention to detail of a surgeon wielding a scalpel over a dying man.

He descended to the living room. While his lovely blonde wife shimmered blissfully on upstairs, he composed a note to her successor, stel-



handed, Irma Palatsuma.
"My Dearest Irma," he wrote. "At last the time has come and we can be united forever as man and wife. My work here is finished today. I can catch a night train to Philadelphia and can be in your arms by midnight. The new home in Detroit I have secured as waiting for its beautiful mistress. Until tonight, all my love, my darling future joys, from your own beloved Emil."

Schmidt put the letter into an envelope, addressed it to "Miss Emma Palatsuma" at a prominent hotel in Philadelphia. Then he went down to the post box on the corner and mailed it.

Returning home, he went into the bedroom to awaken the doomed second wife. He lightly kissed her cheek, as was his daily custom before going off to his job in a jewelry manufacturing concern. This day, however, he was not going to work—he planned to take his wife on a picnic. As soon as he had turned off his wife he intended to dash off to Philadelphia, pick up the replacement spouse and proceed to Detroit to start a new life.

Mrs. Schmidt awakened with the kiss. She pulled her head down so that his lips touched hers.

"This is our own day, darling," she told him. "Just you and I,

all alone out in the country. Won't it be wonderful?"

Helmuth Schmidt prepared the picnic basket, then drove his car down to the garage to fill up with petrol and oil. When he returned, he took a hefty spanner from his toolkit and placed it on the back seat.

By noon the Schmidt couple were driving along a deserted coastal road. Saying he knew an ideal picnic spot, he turned off down a secluded road which soon deteriorated into a rough track that led down the almost precipitous side of a deep ravine.

The narrow path was bounded on one side by the steep wall of the ravine. On the other side was a flimsy wooden fence as a safeguard against a sheer 100-foot drop.

Suddenly the car came to a stop. Schmidt told his wife he thought there was a puncture in one of the rear tyres. He got out and went back to investigate.

Mrs. Schmidt, intent on the scenery ahead, did not notice him lift out the wrench from the back seat. He switched the car and came up noiselessly behind her. She made no sound as she slumped forward under the attack.

Schmidt released the brake. The car and its unconscious passenger

ran forward a few yards and crashed through the fence. It went hurtling down the side of the ravine to land in a twisted heap of wreckage at the bottom.

Schmidt walked back up the track. At the turnoff a motorist had stopped. He asked what had caused the horrendous crash he had heard. Unhesitatingly Schmidt told him there were a gang of workmen doing some blasting down in the ravine. Stunned, the motorist continued on his way.

Schmidt walked up the highway in the opposite direction. Two miles away was a small town where he caught a train back to Lakewood. At his house he began to pack his own clothes and anything of value belonging to his wife. From a small cabinet the kept in a drawer of her dressing table, he took bundles of notes totalling more than 2,000 dollars. Then he took a taxi to the railway station.

In a few hours he was registering at a prominent Philadelphia hotel. The hour was late. But Helmuth Schmidt's day was still far from finished. He bathed, donned clean clothes with the same care he had displayed that morning and made a telephone call to his intended wife.

(Continued on page 55)





BATTLE

On the swaying humps of camels, Bishop's men clumped into combat with the Mahaves. It was the weirdest fight Arizona ever saw.

BY BOB DUNCAN
ILLUSTRATED BY AL SCHMIDT

● FACT

OF THE CRANKY CAMELS



*The camels charged up the hill,
directly towards the Indians.*

AS Bishop looked out across the rolling hills of the Mohave country, a sick feeling rose in the pit of his stomach, a feeling of dread, combined with the nervous nausea resulting from sitting atop a swaying dromedary. Looking around at the young faces of the men mounted on the 43 camels, he began to swear softly to himself, softly and comprehensively. He cursed the day he had started this trek into the Arizona country, the foul stench of the camels and the rugged hills and mountains that could disprove death at any time on the leaves and arrows of the blood-thirsty Mohaves.

This was 1866. For two years the army had been trying its camel experiment in the south-west, import-

ing the huge beasts from the Near East, using them to pack supplies across the waterless wastes of the West. For two years, frontier army men had been bashing camels in the head, quarreling with the Oriental camel drivers brought to train the Americans. Army in the use of the remnants. It was Jeff Davis' great dream to use the beasts, but it had sailed through unforeseeable difficulties.

Bishop had bought the camels from the Government for his "S. A. Bishop Freighting Service" and he had never regretted his purchase. But the camels had never had to be Indian fighters and their behaviour was highly unpredictable when they got scared. How they would perform in the threatening hours ahead troubled him a great deal.

Bishop looked at the Syrian camel driver, Hadji Ali, the little man who was known on the frontier as He Jelly. He wondered if this passive Syrian had any fear of death, if he trusted these swaying humpbacked creatures to save his life when the Indians attacked. "They will attack," Bishop thought grimly. "Before or later, they'll swoop down on us."

"You look greater than a sailor on his first voyage."

The voice startled him and he looked around to see Sam Willis, one of his best Indian fighters in the Arizona country. His knees crossed over the neck of a brown dromedary, his lean body squeezed into the hollow shell of the camel saddle. Bishop wondered if he himself looked as Jewish. Camels were made for packing freight, not for riding into the Indian country.

"I feel green," Bishop said acerbically. "And as helpless as a buffalo calf."

"We can always turn around and go back," Sam said.

Maybe it would be best to go back. To go ahead would be like treading barefoot on the tail of a rattlesnake. But somewhere east of the San Francisco Mountains, his friend, Lieutenant Edward Beale, was leading a surveying party along the 36th parallel, straight toward an uprising of Mohaves, who were fresh from a recent conquest over an immigrant train. To go back would mean that Beale's party, low on supplies, would fall into the hands of the Indians and be wiped out. He had to go on.

Sam stuffed in his saddle, his eyes separating at the Mohave Wash in front of them, his lathery fingers getting the reins in his saddle boot.

Maybe Colonel Hoffman was not such a fool after all," he said. "From all the signs, there's a mass of Indians around here."

Bishop shook his head. "The colonel's no fool," he said. No, Colonel Hoffman was a smart man. He had been ordered to meet Beale's party at the Colorado with supplies to carry them into California. Bishop remembered the non-committal face of the sergeant sent by Colonel Hoffman to the little mining town where Bishop operated a freight service. He remembered the sergeant's words, delivered in a matter-of-fact voice, fired from too much lonely service in the south-west. "Run into Indians," the sergeant had said. "Mohaves been butchering immigrants in the mountains, feeling pretty frisky. The colonel decided to go down to Fort Gaines to get more men." Here the sergeant ejected a stream of tobacco juice into the dirt. "Colonel said I should come tell you."

Bishop frowned as he thought about it. It was a simple matter of military logistics. The colonel had taken a force of men to rendezvous with the surveying party coming from the east, had constituted a larger force of Indians and turned back to get more men. It was a simple, impractical thing. But Beale was Bishop's friend, and that

made a difference. It made a big enough difference so that he had to risk the lives of 43 men, that he had to gamble all the camels he used in his freighting service. He was staking everything he owned, including his life, on the chance that they would be able to warn Beale in time.

All afternoon, they sploded steadily up the Mohave Wash, Bishop sitting aloof on his saddle, watching the passive face of Sam Willis as it clouded in a frown. With each mile that passed beneath the spoozy heavens of the camels, they plunged deeper into Mohave country, closer to either a union with Beale's party or slow death at the hands of the Mohave warriors. As the sun began to sizzle in the west, and long, fingerlike shadows stretched across the wash, Bishop raised his hand for a halt.

In a way, he knew it might be easier to skip stop the mounts, for it was a much more difficult procedure to dismount from the humpbacked camels than it was to retain balance seven feet in the air. Yet travelling by camel back in the Indian country was bad enough by day. By night the camels seemed to grope even more aimlessly, and to run into an Indian ambush once the sun was down would offer little chance for survival.

If Jelly's camel had already lurched to the ground at the four heavy jolts that it took a dromedary to get into a prone position, Bishop braced himself as the front knees of his dromedary seemed to buckle. He came down with a jolt as the back legs collapsed, then was whipped forward again as the camel fell to the hard pad on its hump. Around him, the other animals were dropping gracefully and easily to the ground. One man, Bishop noted, was thrown over the head of his mount to roll sprawling in the sand. The man did not get up and Bishop

was aware that something was wrong.

As he knelt beside the man, he saw that one leg was badly twisted. Already the dusty blue duck of the man's trousers had begun to turn an ugly, muddily red. Shifting the cloth with his hands, he saw the jagged bone sticking through the white flesh. Gritting his teeth he went to work, fortifying the injured man with whiskey while two others strengthened the leg and splinted it.

By the time the cook fire was sprouting sheltered flames, the eye of the man had winked out and the cold night air was filled with the heavy greases of the camels as they rested. Bishop felt better once his stomach had been settled with a tin plate of hot beans and beef but the fire disturbed him. Even though it was sheltered, it seemed to offer a beacon for every sharp-eyed hawk in the Mohave country. He had down on a blanket away from the fire and watched Sam clearing his rifle, as if this was nothing more than a hunting party with no more at stake than a prime buffalo hump.

"When do you suppose they'll hit us?" Bishop said, quietly, looking up at the cold stars.

Sam's voice was quiet. "Tomorrow. The next day maybe."

"That soon?"

Sam nodded. "There was a horn to the east today. The Indians are moving, and there must be a hell of a lot of 'em. April's a bad time to cross this country. The Indians get restless after a long winter, and they always like to shoot up the spring immigrants."

Lighting a cigarette, Bishop felt it hiss sharply against his tongue. He blew the smoke into the cold air and thought about his chances. Tomorrow, he would have to send the man with the broken leg back across the Colorado, with two extra men to accompany him. That would leave him with 40 youngsters who



"Let me be the first to welcome you to the firm, Miss Wilson."



had never fought Indians and who got swack on camel back.

"I'm sorry about these youngsters," he said aloud, half to himself. "Just because they were packing freight for me from the mining camps doesn't mean they had to risk their necks on a trip like this."

A coyote barked somewhere in the night, and Sam's voice seemed to echo the lonely loneliness as he spoke. "If they got back," he said softly, "they'll be men."

Bishop did not sleep for a long time. As he lay in the darkness, the fire dying out, he looked at the two stiffies who sat staring into the black night, aware of the slightest noise from the darkness. He closed his eyes and his thoughts began to pile into his brain—thoughts of camels in the American Southwest. It was damn foolish, he mused whispered, damn foolish...

Bishop stirred uneasily on his blanket and realized that he had almost fallen asleep. One of the camels had begun to snore now, a great rasping sound that echoed on the night, and despite the cold air, the loud colour of the great beasts stung Bishop's nostrils and made him wince. "You're a fool, Bishop," he murmured to himself. He felt himself becoming drowsy, and in the twilight between consciousness and sleep, he seemed to see the great mass of Indians wheeling around Bishop's surveying party, drawing closer until his friend was lost from sight in the whirlpool of Indians, ponies and dust.

HE was jerked from sleep by the sounds of a man shouting, and

as the light poked into his eyes, he realized it was morning. The men were already stirring. Glancing around, he saw a man kneeling at his camel with a heavy heart. He dare he could open his mouth, the trouble was done. The camel's head pivoted around on his long neck and the powerful teeth sank into the man's arm, cleaving a hole of flesh away as easily as it could have been done with a knife. Instantly, Bishop was on his feet, running toward the stricken man, who gaped wide-eyed at the blood gushing from the wound.

"You damn fool," Bishop shouted at him. "What did you kick him for?" He flinched with a start, and the man stammered an answer, his face white with shock. He had tried to saddle the animal and the camel had snapped at him. He was not going to take that from any animal. As the cloth bit into the arm and stopped the flow of blood, the injured man glowered at the camel and began to swear.

"I'll kill him," he said. "I'll kill him."

"You won't kill anything," Bishop snapped, trying to calm the rage that was growing within him. He looked at the hump of the growling camel. The hump had grown fatter and there were scarring scars where the saddle had irritated at the day before. For a moment, Bishop felt like hitting the man.

"Why didn't you put the straw tickling on the hump before you saddled yesterday?" he demanded, glowering.

The man said nothing and Bishop

wheeled to face the man cowering about the camel. "If any of you can't saddle your animal, you might as well get the hell out now," he said. "We can't afford to lose anybody, but if you can't follow instructions, you're not any good to us. I don't like these stinking animals any more than you do..." His voice trailed on and he turned to his own white drumhead and began to saddle the great animal.

None of the men moved and Bishop said nothing more. Sam Wilke had begun to move around, quietly stirring the men to act and saddle their camels. His Jolly had already moved over to the camel with the green back, and his fingers soothed the hump with oil as he spoke in Syrian to the great beast, who seemed to understand.

As the camels started forward, Bishop looked over his shoulder at the three camels disappearing at the west toward the Colorado River and safety. For a moment, he almost wished that he had decided to turn back. But now, there were other things to think about. For as the day progressed and the sun climbed higher in the sky, the dust cloud in the east grew more and more distant and there was another reason to perfect the dangers of the trail ahead.

In the pure blue sky, Bishop saw black specks wheeling and circling over a spot up the wash. Soon he could make out the shapes of birds with long, scrawny necks and black feathers. Towards—the camp below at death in the West.

(Continued on page 71)



Left, Frank "Typhoon" Tyson about to capture another wicket. He was the destroyer of Australian batsmen in the cricket Test series completed in March of this year.



English athletes, especially in the male and team-country departments, have brought Britain back to international prominence. Rugby League is another British strong point.



The indomitable spirit of England is never beaten, only suppressed for a period. That period is now over and England is forging once more to the top in many sports.

BRITAIN MAKES A SPORTING COMEBACK



BRITAIN, birthplace of most of the major sports played throughout the world, is fighting her way back to international sport pre-eminence, after a post-war recession which has lasted almost a decade. Brilliant individual Britons in many sports are forcing the nation's name back into sporting headlines, where it belongs.

Despite the dependable brilliance of Len Hutton, and the run-getting artistry of Denis Compton, England was severely thrashed by Australia in a succession of cricket Test series, after the Second World War. A desperate distribution of captaincy served only to sustain ascendancy over the lesser cricket powers, India, South Africa and New Zealand.

In mid-1953, there was a pathetically release of the English team, selected to tour Australia. Bad man fast bowler, Fred Trueman and leading ball-bowling, Tony Lock had been omitted from the line-up.

Despite the omission of Trueman, the English side still featured its greatest speed battery since the war. Big gun of the attack was 24-year-old Northants right hand fast bowler, Frank Tyson. He was expected to operate only for short spells. "Typhoid Tyson" is now the most reported name in current Australian cricket records.

Before his selection, Tyson's stamina was tested. He set out to prove that his adverse critics were quite wrong. Along the roads of

Surrey, in the northern winter of last year he swung an axe for hours, cutting down willow trees for a cricket bat factory. The work built up muscles in his arms and shoulders which could have been exhibited, with pride, by a professional fighter. At night he jogged along miles of country thoroughfares to strengthen legs and improve staying power. In search of further subscription to improvement, tenacious Tyson joined a coaching school, headed by former Surrey professional cricketer, Alf Gover.

It all paid a grand dividend for Tyson and England. In the first Test against Australia, he bowled for long spells and ended without any signs of fatigue. But 186 runs were scored from him before he took his first Test cricket. He finished with the poor average of 1 for 144.

The second Test, played on the Sydney Cricket Ground, is now aptly described as "Tyson's Test". His result in the match, was 4-55 and 0-44. He bowled for an hour and a half, unchanged, before lunch on the final day and, during that spell, he took 3 wickets for it. In his second over he dismissed Jim Barker and Graeme Hale and set the stage for England's victory. His achievement was made even greater by the fact that, on the previous day, having against Ray Lindwall, he had been knocked unconscious by a rising ball. It was stated in Sydney press that it was unlikely

that he would take any further part in the game. He was sent to hospital for an X-ray of his head, but he resumed his training and, before the end of play for the day, bowled at his top speed to take a wicket. When he scattered the stumps of Bill Johnston, last man in, England had won by 14 runs.

His performance in the third Test was even better. He took 2 wickets for 48 in the first innings and completely demoralized the Australian batsmen in their second visit to the wicket, with an awe-inspiring 1 for 37.

Tyson is a quiet, sensible and intelligent young man. He obtained his B.A. degree at Durham University, intending to become a school teacher. His entry into the coaching world has now been postponed by his success at cricket.

A 16 years-old Tyson made his first attempt to enter club cricket when he travelled from his Lancashire village to Old Trafford, his local county ground. His bowling failed to impress the Lancashire coach. It was several years before he was given another chance. This time it was with the Northamptonshire Club, against the Australian touring team of 1933. His speed made a deep impression on most of the visiting batsmen, more particularly McDonald and Hale, whom he dismissed in his first over. His final figures were 2-67 off 15 overs and critics laid the foundation of the rumour that he could not play. Coach Alf Gover was one of the



"He ha! That sup domestica really believes I'm going to drop in and see him tonight!"

few knowledgeable ones who claimed that Tyson would have no trouble in standing up to the rigours of an Australian tour.

"When Tyson bowled in 1933," he said, "he was as green as grass and his long run took too much out of him. He is intelligent, a keen student of cricket and learns fast. He is not very heavy but he is well muscled and his stamina will not fail him at any stage of the tour."

Frank Tyson's rise has been meteoric but it was made possible by a new policy, adopted by English officials, designed to ensure that the outstanding future of Britain is assured. A Youth Cricket Association was founded.

It has long been felt in England that Australia's supremacy in cricket was indigenous. Australia, with a population of less than ten millions, for years has been able to produce cricket teams, whose strength can match that of their English opponents, drawn from an aggregate of almost sixty millions. England claimed that the reason that the Australian boys had more opportunities to master the game

There were more open spaces for them which provided level strips for youths. The average English lad learned the game playing on isolated portions of public parks or on the cobble-stone surfaces of lanes or roads. Thus, loss of interest in cricket by English youth could be expected. The Marglebone Cricket Club faced the situation with a typically practical reaction — they formed the M.C.C. Youth Cricket Association. The objective was to give to every boy in the country, between the ages of 8 and 18, a chance to play cricket, and to learn to love it, under ideal conditions.

England now holds the Australian M.C.C. Ashes. If their plan to win youth back to the game is successful, the international cricket trophy may be destined to remain on British soil for many years.

THE Rugby League Football Code is not extensively played in the British Isles, but it has a strong following in at least three States in Australia. There is the Paul Harris Trophy for the world champions of the professional Rugby game. At the moment it is in the custody of Scot, David Valentine,

who lives at Huddersfield. Great Britain won the trophy in last year's Rugby League World Cup series.

The British side arrived in France for the contests, with little support. They appeared to be a very ordinary group of players from the industrial north of England. Their opponents were representatives from the industrial north of England. Their opponents were representatives of France, Australia, and New Zealand. Each English player was guaranteed only £25 for the three weeks' itinerary.

Australia was favourite for the Cup, but their exact position in the betting was short lived. Britain shattered Australian defences and played like a team that had everything to gain and nothing to lose. "Boy" Sullivan, a youngster from Dewsbury, in the first game, made a rugged onslaught that earned for him an accurate scalp wound. His retirement was temporary. He came back on to the field and helped his team to success. Leeds player, Gordon Brown, who was regarded as an ordinary club player, developed into a star. Clever little scrum half, Gerry Hines, 16-year star, left the opposition standing flustered.

Sam Smith, the hooker from Huddersfield, in the Final, was hit with an uproot which was definitely a rupture from a main event fight. He retired and staggered for fully a minute and then said, "Let me get the ball out and never mind the punches—it's the ball I'm after."

In answer to this surprising reaction, Australian hooker, Ken Kearney remarked, incredulously, "English players must be getting soft."

When asked to explain his statement, the chunky Australian replied: "In my day in England, if players had received punishment like this team has taken they would get to their opponents and six men would be sent off."

That was the real reason for England's success in the series. They did not "let to their opponents". While the Aussies were playing a tough and knee game and the French were dragging at scrums and sweating and looking off-side, the Britishers were playing football.

Members of the victorious British side, were bitterly disappointed when their coach for two trial games at home, Joe Egan, did not accompany them on the tour. However, they gave him credit for the influence of his leadership, upon their attitude in the series.

In an interview on T.V. Egan said: "The boys had a complex and my biggest job was to make them realize they were not a side without a chance." Egan's argument was well handled.

Australian and New Zealand players were below form because of their fatigue from travelling by air. Now most of them know why the British team failed to retain the Ashes in Australia, in 1934. France's team included Pug Abbott (now of rounded form) and some of the players who toured Australia. To replace Broome and Foxcroft, they had worthy substitu-

tures in Pamirum and Delage. The French children were not the equal of the British youngsters.

When Britain defeated France in the Final, in Paris, loudest support for the winners came from the Australian contingent. They applauded the British comeback.

Britain still retains much of her erstwhile Rugby Union brilliance, but the men on the average English street, heads has laid down in shame when he casts his mind back to the former days of his country's greatness of its National Code, Soccer. The greatest attack ever received by English Soccer was Britain's defeat by America in the 1933 World Soccer Championship staged in Brazil. The U.S.A. never has claimed the word football game as one at which it was likely to succeed.

England's International Soccer record during recent years, has not been impressive. Undoubtedly the greatest blow of all, to prestige, was delivered when the Hungarians beat England by 3 goals to 2, at Wembley in November of 1953. That was the first time that England ever had been beaten at home during 55 years of Soccer history.

This defeat can be easily explained. The European side represented a country which has been struggling to regain economic stability and whose Government recognized the urgent necessity to improve the physical fitness of the nation. Soccer was adopted as the national game of Hungary. Prior to the war there were 18,000 registered Hungarian players. Now there are more than 500,000. The Government encouraged the game by



providing playing fields and equipment, free of charge. The Hungarians, at home, play on fields that are smaller than those of international standard. The restricted space available forces the players to develop particular agility and subtlety of movement.

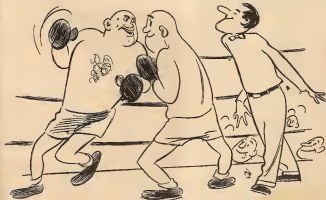
Most ironic circumstance is that in the early days of its improvement, Hungary went to England for its coaches. Nowadays there are 600 paid coaches and trainers licensed in Hungary. In December, 1953, Hungary issued a series of specially over-printed stamps figuring the score in the England-Hungary

match in heavy black figures, across their faces.

Certain of the Hungarians gave his opinion of the trouble that is besetting English Soccer. "English footballers and their leaders haven't learned from their experience in international matches," he said. "They still stick to conventions and tactics of 20 and 30 years ago."

"The chief reason for recent Hungarian successes is just planning and counter-planning," he added. "We have been kept together like one big family. We are familiar with each other's play and moves."

(Continued on page 72)



"Duck under this right cross, Pete. I hate this referee!"

TROUBLE IN CHINA

It was the place of last resort, and that's where Tsi Ling had to go when her lover abandoned her.

By JAMES BELL • FACT

[I]t was a local appointment. That's the title a Crown Colony gives to a bescomber who happens to turn up when there's a job too dirty for a career man to do.

I'd missed my ship at Kowloon, so I crossed my fingers in Hong Kong to look for something to tide me over until I found passage home. The Secretariat passed me on to Customs and from there I was sent to track down the mastermind who was directing the operations of a gang straggling off into Communist China. Being a stranger and not wearing a uniform, I wasn't in much danger of being recognized as a customs agent.

Posing as a trade promoter, I moved to Macao, the Portuguese suspect, holed up in a little pension on the Praia Grande, near the Carmine Gardens, and began working around. I sat for hours in fashion houses, watching the cash being raked in. I strolled up to the Monte and loitered around the Barrac Gale that's the exit from Macao into Communist China, and there I began to see little items that added up.

On the Macao side of the gate were police and guards in Portuguese uniforms. On the China side were Red officials and young police, boys and girls in blue cotton uniforms. They were motionless and efficient on their shining bicycles, but it was soon obvious that many few-armed ones could walk to and fro without hindrance.







One of these was the small, opium-bagging mayor of the Tsin-shan village on the mainland. He carried a Colt in a shoulder holster, had a couple of guards in khaki and Japanese helmets following him, and a fat boy, with a long-barreled sub-gun and a Filipino chorist, as bodyguard.

The Tsin-shan mayor often led whole columns of cyclists through the Harmer Gate. Rumour said they carried gold in their saddle bags. Others said they were opium peddlers. Ma, I didn't know—until one day a cyclist reserved to avoid a car and skidded. The little bag on the back of his saddle spilled gold pounds. That made the little mayor a pay-off man. He followed him one day. But he didn't go to the opium factories where large bullions stink the place up cooking raw opium into the sticky mass you see in the hip joints. No, no, our smooth little mayor went to the Avenida. Elsewhere where Chinese bankers hang from green shutters on pink facades and invite speakers to banquets, lotteries, food, drink and other diversions.

While he sat there, drinking tea, there came to him a dish that would appeal to any kind of addict. She was tall for a Chinese girl; I took her for a Eurasian. She wore a sheath dress of imperial yellow silk with a high, jade-green collar. The dress reached her tiny, black-shoed feet but was slit on each side to her slim hips. Under it she wore white silk trousers, sheer enough to show the tops of her stockings. She sat with him for a few minutes, spoke softly and went away. I followed her. She stopped (she a taxi and disappeared before I could find another to follow her.

"You father?"

An elderly man was staring after her taxi. His face was scarred, his white hair shaggy and his deep-set eyes were yellow from opium. He turned, smiling at me and offered to take me to her.

We walked, not far, to a very famous place; the only opium joint permitted to run wide open in Mexico, where opium smoking was forbidden. The place was said to be owned by a Chinese Nationalist

general who was paying plenty for the privilege. There were three floors. Some had lounges where you could smoke a pipe just like you'd have a drink in your favourite bar. Other rooms were fitted for parties and some had steam baths.

I selected pipes for my guide and myself. A little girl, with a flat face cooked our pills, fed them into our pipes and sat back to await our orders. My pipe tasted good. It was cheap Turkish opium. My guide sucked his down and ordered more. I had three and was beginning to feel too uncomfortable, so I quit. I don't like to smoke before sundown, anyway.

"The girl?" I whispered.
"Her name is Tai Ling," my hapless friend sighed.

"Where is she?" I asked.
He gestured languidly upwards.
"General's girl. She smokes 40 pipes a day."

Then she must be the contact between the general and the little

Mayor, and had probably met the mayor to arrange a conference. But for what?

I bought the hoghead a pot of opium and left him in heaven. Then I strolled into the hall, cool and dim, with palms in pots and little overgrown trained on wire shapes to represent gods and goddesses. I walked upstairs and out on a balcony. Stepping onto, I looked into your sister room. But I didn't see the girl in yellow.

Then I rounded the building toward the back and saw a shutter half closed. I listened and heard the delicate tinkling of a love. There was a sigh and soft voices. Then there was movement; a door opened and closed. I shoved open the shutter and slipped inside.

Tai Ling was there, lying down, with a short, padded jacket over her transparent silk trousers, her slim neck on a green porcelain pillow. A pipe, trimmed with silver and tortoise-shell, lay on a lacquer table beside her. The room was full of the resinous tang of opium.

I took her arm, hot hand. One little finger nail was long, with a sheath jewelled with a number of rubies and diamonds.

"Who went out?" I whispered.
"Amah," she sighed. "Who are you?"

"Your friend," I lied.
She smiled, slow and happy.
"I have two friends now, you and Two John."

"Is Two John the man from Tsin-shan?" I asked softly.

She laughed.
"Two John is a great general. He gives me fine things. He is beautiful and he is rich."

I heard movement outside the door and jumped for the window just as a shrill chatter broke out from inside the house. I dropped over the rail and landed on the roof next door. Then a long drop



"I never take the first thing that's shown to me."

2 SHOP
PET



"Speaking."

loaded me on my neck as an ally slung with refuse. I heard yells and someone fired a shot. I got out of there, made it to the ransackable pier in the shallow bay, and hung around there until the steam ferry Sai An arrived. Then I got aboard and stayed until the ferry went back to Hong Kong.

Customs wasn't very impressed with my report. They'd suspected the general for some time, also the little maven. What they wanted was something to stop the smuggling of opium.

Back I went to Macao. I was wary about the general's place. Maybe the girl had recognized me. The creek might have been the going-out the window. I spent six weeks without learning a thing.

I was in the bar of the Bella Vista when my hophood acquaintance, still wearing his gray beret, shuffled up to my side and shook his head sorrowfully at whisky I was drinking.

"Do you ever go to the general's place any more?" I asked.

He smiled at me with broken teeth and shifty eyes whose pupils were like pinpoints.

"Ah, the girl in yellow silk. She is not there any more. There was trouble—a man. She is driven out."

"Where is she?" I demanded.

"Where do they all go?" he shrugged. "Rua de Felicidade. Where else?"

I knew that one. It's a short street below the Cathedral that runs across the tip of the island.

THAT houses are small, two-storied,

some yellow, some pink and some pale blue. On little porches before the doors are slim, young Chinese girls, pretty as painted dolls and neat as pins. Beside them at their ankles — their maids — in black, shiny cotton, their weathered faces inscrutable, their eyes watchful.

When I went there hunting for the general's girl, a few women were strolling down the middle of the street. A tout beckoned me into a room where a child of no

more than ten, danced a dainty dance about a lotus. I went into another house and got my pocket picked.

Three nights later my hophood guide picked me up, and for the price of a small pot of opium, led me to a small, clean house in a garden where a dwarf tree set beside a little pool with goldfish in it. I found the girl on a satin-covered mat in an opium room that reeked of opium and incense. Her head was propped up on a porcelain pillow, her hand clutching an opium pipe.

"Where is Tao Suet?" I asked.

She didn't know. He was angry with her. He had driven her out after taking away all her jewels and money. And now there was no way for her to make except in the Street of Delight.

I started in.

"Where does the man from Tain-shan take the money?" I said softly.

"Many places," she said dreamily.

"To Point 13. Sometimes to the fish wharf on the river bay, sometimes to the hang of the Heavenly Perfume Freight Service."

"And it is all for Two John?"

"He is very rich," she sighed. "Why is the gold taken to those places?"

"Because in those places the oil is put into the ships."

"Two John delivers the oil and is paid when it is loaded?"

She nodded, her hot, thin hand holding mine like a child's.

"Where is the next shipment of oil?"

"I do not know," she sighed. "I—"

Great tears glistened in her eyes. I turned. The crash stood behind me.

She bent her head and swiftly dipped a blob of opium from the pot, turned and spit it in an oil flame until it sputtered, then placed it in the pipe bowl. The girl reached for it. The old woman went out. I watched her leave and turned back to the girl. She was sleeping.

I sat watching her. I hated to awaken her, but I had to know more. Two John had several places of delivery. But evidently the Reds, through their Tientsin agent, didn't trust him and paid off only when the oil was safely aboard their vessels. That meant watching the places the girl had mentioned; from any one of them the next pay-off might take place. I was bending over her when something tapped the window shutter.

"Senhor!" It was the old hop-head's voice. "What is it?" I whispered at the window.

"The crash, a little bedoga. I hear her telephone general that you are with the Lang."

So that was it. Someone had seen me go into the girl's room at the general's place and she had been

knicked out and watched like a hawk to see if I'd come back.

"Call a taxi," I ordered. "I'll bring the girl."

"No time, senhor," he gasped. "They come."

I heard a car screech to a stop, running footsteps and a crash on a door—then high-pitched gabble in Chinese. I couldn't help but, lying there, sleeping like a dead thing, I dived through the window, fingered drawer and all. A shot startled me and the hop-head pulped in the darkness.

Around the house a big figure plunged. I kicked him. Hophead grabbed my arm. I followed him through a little gate, up an alley, into another yard and a house. A mandarin tinkled and feminine voices giggled. We rushed upstairs to a flat roof. Someone shouted, a pistol barked and a bullet sang past to flick plaster from a wall beside my head. We rolled off the roof, dashed into a room where a sailor sprawled and a girl was going through his pockets. She opened her mouth to scream but Hophead shoved her backwards and wrapped a quilted mat over her head. An axman looked in. We bolted past her and into the street. Hophead was panting but he mentioned a wall across the road. We climbed it, floundered down a bank into a creek, waded across it, up an alley where a dog yelped and snarled, and came out on a broad wall—lit ascends. At one end of it two policemen strolled.

I slowed, thanking my stars, and the next moment three Chinese erupted from a dark doorway and came at us. I yelped. The police bolted.

We wheeled and ran for our lives. The chase was becoming fer-

ocious. Wherever we ran we seemed in danger of being grabbed by Chinese. I never before realized there were so many. And when you have them all against you, things seem more than serious—they seem fatal.

We ran into doorways, we raced into houses, pounded up stairs, across landings and out of back doors. But we did not seem to be near escape, we just seemed to be postponing the inevitable. The Chinese followed us; they came from back streets, from out of shadows, they seemed to be in front of us and behind us. Was there no escape?

Once we crouched in a doorway while they pounded past. They came back and chased us through a cafe shop, upstairs and across a roof. Once I thought they had us. Hophead couldn't go on. He crouched beside a roof apartment and stuck his feet out as one of our pursuers came up. The man staggered. Hophead shoved him off the roof.

We ran down some stairs and were in a narrow street where fat-tire shops slid out of doorways, called softly and disappeared. Someone grabbed at my arm as I ran. I slapped him down and he yelped and threw something that landed as it hit the wall. Then we came out on a wide space where there were a few trees and the clink of bayon knives rattled hoarsely with that of drying fish. Hophead, gasping, dragged me into a filthy yard, upstairs and into a room.

"Safe here—senhor," he wheezed.

It was daylight when I awakened. Hophead was gone. So was my watch.

I got ahead the Sun An and climbed sanctuary of the captain's cabin.

We arrived in Hong Kong at 1 o'clock and I reported at once. The Collector thanked me very politely for my information, paid me for my time and brushed me off even more politely.

"There's the Agent, Eilerman Lim, leaving for Singapore tomorrow morning," he said. "You'd better take it."

"Look," I mumbled. "What about Tin Lung? She's a poet—"

"You'd better worry about yourself," he said drily. "There will be a number of people looking for you. We'll see that the girl is taken care of—of course."

Two weeks later, in Singapore, I read in the Straits Times that a well-known Macao personality, Two John, had been found hanged on Point 11, near the Macao fireworks factories. He had been robbed of everything but one English pound, found in a pocket. It didn't seem likely that the Reds would assassinate a man who had been helping them. On the other hand, with things turning out the way they did, maybe they decided that the double-dealing Neuwacht general had done all he could for them and should have his mouth closed forever.

As for lovely Tai Ling—I wish I knew what happened to her.





BUSY

LINE



"I know—I'll get Pat over with her boy friend Don and that nice young man, Jim, she introduced me to last week. He's nice, I could not forget him. Maybe we can all play bridge. What's the number again? Oh, yes, three, five, seven..."

"—and you should see that ensemble, Pat... it's gorgeous... and did you see that show at the Bijou? You did? Yes, I liked him, too, but what about that other chap... wasn't he handsome? Say, I just thought... what about you and Don coming over for a game of bridge? A fourth? Yes, that's a problem... what about that chap you introduced me to last week... what's his name? Jim? Yes, he'll do..."





"Goodness, how time flies — it's nearly half past three. Was I talking on the phone *that* long? Oh well, they should be here about four. I like that Jim — he's nice . . ."



"Oh, hello, Pat, Don and hello to you, too, eh . . . I'm terribly sorry, but I can never remember names. Jim! Of course, how silly of me. We met a couple of weeks ago, didn't we? Now where was that? The Domino? Oh, yes, of course. Well, come on in all of you . . ."



In Tokyo there is a mixture of the East and the West in nightclub acts.



NIGHT LIFE

A tour through nightclubs in various cities reveals that, while acts may vary, the emphasis is always on beautiful women.

By JOHN D. JUKES

There is a nightclub act in Paris, although you may be pardoned in thinking it is Tokyo—because it is an Eastern dance.



IN PARIS at night, when nobody seems to be interested in the Notre-Dame Cathedral, the Luxembourg Palace, the Arc de Triomphe or the Eiffel Tower, except as unimportant architectural landmarks, the heart of this city beats with a new excited fervor in anticipation of better things to come later at the hundreds of night clubs with their chorus girls and solo artists. Paris, to the regular night club patrons, the curiosity seekers, and tourists is synonymous with exciting women fabulous entertainment, featuring the age-old attraction—Venus with variations.

In London and New York you take a little trouble contacting the right people and let shown to your table in a dimly lit night spot and sip your liquor while you wait for the floor show, and the solo act by the French beauty your friend told you about. You know she isn't French at all—she comes from Mr. Langham or New Orleans—but it doesn't matter because you and all the other hawarded gentlemen have come to see another variation of feminine charm as part of an evening of dining and dancing.

Go to Japan, where night life has plenty of attractive cabarets with floor shows that grip you, vaudeville theatres that specialize in strip acts, or if your taste is for something else, there are plenty of dance halls where the girls are as attractive and as captivating as anywhere in the world.

Then there is Germany with a Berlin pre-occupied by pretty fantasies whose mystery of the dramatic aspects of the strip are applauded by German taste as a return to pre-war gaiety and a welcome change from the prevailing east-west tension.

Try any capital city on the world and you'll find that when the sun sets and night spreads her cooling mantle, temperatures soar to the boiling of beautiful women as they weave through their paces.

Nothing in Tokyo has made a faster post-war recovery than its vaudeville and night clubs. At first they catered mainly for military occupation personnel or blackmarketeers thriving on an unbalanced economy. Now they are less exclusive; their patrons are from every class, having three things in common: the money to get in, and the clothes and demeanor to satisfy the management.

The most notable innovation in vaudeville theatres and night spots is the strip show, and brother, the taste is terrific. The act is simply the American style "strip girl"—with variations.

When this startling piece of Western culture first hit Tokyo theatres the Japanese public was dumfounded. Except in bath-houses, public nudity was unknown to them, but war changes a lot of things.

Apart from cabarets, which paved the way in the beginning, there are now ten theatres in Tokyo specializing in strip shows. The girls earn from 125 to 300 dollars a month, which is far more than the average hard-working Japanese woman makes.

At first their performance did not venture beyond made static posing, but after a time they branched out into dancing and acrobatic stunts. The customers wanted variety, and the customer is always right!

There are girls whose figures would make you change your mind about the "Celtic Astaire", and revise your opinions of the comparative attractions of our Western beauties.

One girl, with flowing hair which falls in shimmering black ripples about her faultless shoulders, dresses her strip dressed in two small flowers for the upper part of her body, and a loose garment which she holds around her lower torso. Her dance revolves to an unquoted shame the time-honoured fox-dance. Its element of publicity of movement, its delicate balance of revelation and concealment in a mirage of feminine charm which could not offend the most fastidious and its coquettish simplicity is breathtaking in the extreme.

Thus girl's dance belongs to one of the five night clubs that are approved for the occupation forces. Some of her sister attractions feature garments similar to hers, the

variations being the length of thigh exposed and the movements of the dance.

All these clubs too, there are torch singers who put over their acts in a Madama Butterfly tradition—their Oriental garb giving an exciting interpretation to Western songs.

The night club business is really booming in Japan and managers have plenty of good talent to choose from. Japanese choruses are as shapely and as captivating as any in the world. They're versatile too, and their native entertainment customs are a refreshing change when intermingled with the western entertainments they've learned so well.

IN PARIS you'll find the system different from that in Tokyo: the most expensive shows are not necessarily the most frank. In one middle-standard dive around god-rugs you'll find the men impatiently waiting for the company to quieten the gay chatter and head out the fishing rods.

The stage lights brighten and the house lights dim.

The company explains the rules of the game. Then he'll beckon the

girls. The first thing you'll notice is that they're all fully clothed beauties. The next is that each garment on each girl has a metal ring attached to it. They will all line up on the stage.

Attendants stand around the fishing rods, and with a word from the company you'll try your hand at the most exciting snaling you've ever seen.

Your first cast at the girl you've chosen may be all awry, and you'll know you mustn't get your line snarled up with the fellow's cast to you as you cast. Soon you'll hook the first ring, and as you wind up the reel off will come her cast.

The audience makes mad bets on who will be the most successful angler.

It doesn't take long, and when the last girl has been stripped, they all disappear into the wings and the game is over.

But all games are not necessarily for the unscrupulous angler. The intellectual is also catered for. In another club, a quiz programme is featured. You'll see a beautiful girl come onto the stage, and beside her the company will ask the first question—an easy one. The man who answers first will go onto the stage and take off the girl's costume.

So it goes on, the questions getting harder as each garment is due for removal; the lights getting dimmer when each item is removed by hand by the man who answers the question.

The last question of course is the hardest, and it is not always answered. The girl consequently goes back to her dressing room wearing one garment.

Naturally the company gives clues throughout the quiz. Most times the last garment is removed just prior to the total blackout of lights.

From these comparatively mild-dive-dances we can visit one of far sadder resorts. You only have to know the way or the right people. The dirty lit interior of these places often partly conceals a surprising number of patrons. You'll find well-to-do Americans and Englishmen, sailors, businessmen, artists, and no-toppers, together with confidence men, right up and down the line from bookmakers to boot-leggers.

Adagio dances, a world favourite comprising of a man-woman act in costume to the tempo of South American or Mexican music, become more daring as the dives become more interior, and the acrobatic stunts in these dances become more suggestive. It is these places that help to make the name of Paris synonymous with sex.

FROM the dives, we go to the Folies Bergeres, where the act of the strip is at its highest, where the strip is only part of a really good act.

The latest and most amazing act to be introduced into the Folies is by a man who is dressed as a cat. He has a tail attached to his cat suit, and what he can't do with that tail is nobody's business.

Whatever the constitution of the tail, here it has power of self-



Japanese girls show they have nothing to learn from their Western sisters.



The Agatha dance is always popular and Paris nightclubs make a big feature of it.

control, is a secret which he won't divulge, for he can hang from the tail, swing it around as a cat can, and even twirl it to and fro, and balance when he falls from a height to land on all fours.

The act is supported by a series of beautiful girls who have the briefest of clothing. They take up positions around the stage and he walks—still like a cat—around and between them, swinging his long tail around their waists, around their legs, over their shoulders, and around their necks.

He can even support his own weight on the long, sinuous tail by swinging it around a girl's waist. The act is the talk of Paris. It is quite amazing, and in all aspects unique.

Variations of the two-hundred lbs. dance can be seen at the Folies, and one of them incorporates a scientific phenomenon.

The stage is completely blacked out, and the audience then sees a large illuminated plastic balloon float on to the stage. This balloon is not painted or coated with any opaque phosphorescent preparation, because, for the consummation of the act, a completely transparent and colorless balloon is essential.

The balloon begins to "dance" to the bidding of the girl behind it, but she is in darkness. Gradually the theatre loses its glow blackness and a deep twilight is noticed. By this time the audience can see only

a little of the girl dancer.

As the lights of the theatre brighten and the deep twilight becomes lighter, more and more of the girl can be seen. She is dancing all the time, with the emphasis of movement on the parts of her anatomy which can be seen through the illuminated balloon.

But as the house lights become brighter and more of the girl is seen, so too does the balloon grow dimmer. It is an amazing act.

The finale comes with the dancer fully visible through the now clear balloon and the house lights at full strength.

This act, together with the Cat Man, are two examples of the strip, or near-strip, in the better theatres and night clubs of the world. Money and publicity want to give the patrons variation, and the more unusual the better.

The emphasis remains on feminine beauty, and this is supported by variations in torch-singer acts in which lighting plays a big part, and by comedians and the rest of the vaudeville and night-club methods.

London and New York are about on a par with night-time attractions of Venus with variations. Good taste has limited ambitious projections of night club entertainments in both cities, but wherever you go you will find the French trend for more act in feminine acts influencing song and dance routines.

For instance, in New York, where public taste staid of static made posing long ago, one act which went over well recently features a line of forty beautiful girls, divided equally into blondes wearing white clothing, and brunettes in black. They danced on to the stage in front of a merry-go-round in the centre of the stage.

The merry-go-round had alternate black and white horses, and during their dances, the girls each took to the saddles of the horses—a blonde for a white horse, and a brunette for a black horse.

As the contraption spun, the girls changed horses to the music, swinging gracefully around the outside of the circular platform to give greater effect, and removing their clothing piece by piece as the act progressed.

The whole thing was suggestive of the Americans' way of doing things big, effective in a lavish way.

However, the act remains as the peak of artistic perfection in the strip scene, prohibition which is forever searching for variations. And whether it is the strip, torch singing, comedy or ballet in night clubs or vaudeville, it is all a part of night life in every city of the world.

And regardless of the place or the climatic time of the year, beautiful girls are the essential commodity. Without them night life would be meaningless.





By ERIC JESSOP • FICTION

Fighting Man Bows Out



He was a young, clean kid; he shouldn't have to climb to the top on dirt. If he did, he would finish like Punchy . . .

HE LIVED in a sour rooming-house and spent his afternoons working out at Daddy's gym. For this he did odd jobs for Daddy, so his training expense was not "set." The day nights, he hung around the Arena.

You never know what a problem boy won't show. At the rate of pay, some boys didn't show on Saturday. Particularly if they'd learned unpleasant things about their opponents during the week.

So Punchy hung around, ready to go on at any second, like the serious underdog he was.

And he was saving his money. It was hard; a little here and a little there, but he had sixty pounds in the tobacco tin now, the tin he had in the top of the sleeping mattress in his bed. When he got another sixty, he was taking off for a job waiting in a gym in Portland.

He'd never been anything but a club fighter, always willing and at shape. For two months, eight years ago, he'd been a hardliner at the Arena, but he wasn't wind-up material. He was just another guy making a living.

Both ears were battered and both brows heavily scarred. His nose was flat, and there were bruises, from time to time, in what God had given him for a brain.

He kept on; he was a man with a mission, and the mission was Portland.

They'd only started calling him Punchy in the past two years, and they never kicked when he was the underdog. He was rugged, and an unconscious corner, and one hell of a man to put down.

It's a big place this house. A

former mansion, full of bells and thin, wallboard walls. Full of smells and messes. The wall to Punchy's right, as you faced the door, was wallboard.

He first heard their voices on a Tuesday evening in May.

She said, "John told me, and her husband's a sports writer, John."

"Sure," he said. "I wish I had a quid for everything sports writers don't know."

"Well, doesn't it seem strange to you? First that Delan person. You didn't even hit him, and he went down, John. And then Art Allen."

"Stoney," he said, "you don't like my trade, I know. But it's what I want. It's one place where the big money is. You have any regard for money?"

"Enough. I've more for you. You could be anything you wanted to be, John Gallagher. Jean's husband says you've got a flair for words, and you could get on at the Courier. He said you ran the school paper. I never knew that."

"Did he tell you I was the amateur middleweight title, too?"

"He did. He said it's a long step up from the greatest amateur in the world to the cheapest title professional. He said it's another place, entirely."

"Money, do you want me to quit? Are you tired of poverty?"

"I haven't had enough poverty, yet, to know how bad it can be. I want you to quit at—of it's dishonest."

"Do you think I'm dishonest?"

"I don't think so. But you're not—not the Johnny I married."

There was a silence after that. Punchy went out to supper at the

Greek's, and came back to read a magazine, and the silence was still in effect.

Then, about nine o'clock, she said, "Oh, Johnny—"

And he said, "Baby, we can't fight. I love you so much, but we can't fight in a place like this. Our love's all we got."

Punchy was pleased, though the lad certainly didn't sound like a fighter.

He lay on the bed, trying to place the name. His mind wasn't what it should be, lately. Then he remembered. A corner, they said the kid was. Johnny Gallagher, that was it. Nick Perot was handling him.

Nick was a very rich man and a very smart one, and if he'd left some broken men behind him on the trail—well, that showed he was smart. Nick had brought Duke Dilly along to wind-ups at the stadium. Duke still hung around selling pencils. And Ed Freeman, and Maxie Field, and Joe Greene, Nick had handled. Every one of them broke, today, but Nick was still up there. Nick was smart, all right.

Punchy lay on the bed, wondering where he'd be if he'd had a manager like Nick.

He saw the girl, next morning, in the hall. She had dark hair and dark blue eyes and she regarded Punchy of a girl named Louise, a girl he must have known in his youth. All that was left was the name, just Louise.

"Marry, Mrs. Gallagher," Punchy said.

She smiled and said, "Good morning."

"Don't you worry none about Johnny," Punchy said. "He's in



"Step down, please."

good hands, Johnny is"

She looked at him quietly a moment. Then, "You're a fighter, aren't you?"

"Since I've been out here. And never regretted a day of it."

"How old are you now?"

"Thirty-one," he said. "And in the best shape. Fightin' keeps you in shape."

She looked at him for a few more seconds before going on. Punchy wondered at the faint gleam of fright in the dark blue eyes.

At Rafferty's that afternoon, he took special note of Johnny.

Johnny was one of those orthodox guys, tall and moving, right-protected the chin. He moved sweet enough, and his grin was the clean pink of perfect condition. But

Punchy had no particular respect for the orthodox guys. Gave him a Dempsey or a Mackay Walker, any day.

Nice-looking guy, though. He could understand how the dames would sail for him.

When he came into his room that evening, he bowed her say, "You should have seen him, Johnny, that's all. He must live in the building. Oh, Johnny, you should have seen him. When I think—"

"Now, look," Johnny answered, "this game is tough enough. You're only making it a lot tougher, talking like that." A pause. "Dick gave me a little advance. Why don't we cut out and take in a movie?"

A longer pause, and she said, "All right. I'd like that."

In his room, Punchy counted the

gaily pounds in the tobacco tin, and the seven in his wallet. Then he looked through the magazine for a while, but her words continued to haunt him.

He went over to the bureau, after a while, and looked in the mirror. He looked at himself a long time. Then he slumped and lay down on the bed again.

Louise . . . Who had she been? It must have been a awful long time ago.

The door slammed in the next room, and it was quiet, only the sound of a distant radio coming through the thin walls. It was awfully quiet for this place. Punchy fell asleep.

He dreamed they were hooking the belt on him, and right next to the buckle he saw the name Louise.

There was no work that Saturday. All the boys showed up, and Punchy took a walk over to the park. Spring was here, and the park was full of couples.

He fell to thinking about Louise again—and remembered. She'd been fourteen and he'd been sixteen and he used to meet her on the corner, next to Father's delicatessen. It had been wonderful—until he'd learned how many other boys were meeting her when he didn't.

Punchy had used her as the pattern for all. But this girl just dear, now. She was—was like he'd thought of Louise before the boys had put him wise.

Monday evening, there was no dialogue. Nor Tuesday, Wednesday, he heard her say, "What's the name of the man you're fighting Saturday night, Johnny?"

"Al Deaver. Six rounds, 100, boxer. And it will be a test. Al's been up there."

"How long ago?"

"What difference does that make? He knows his trade. If I get by Al, Nick and I'll get some semi-wind-ups."

Punchy smiled. Al Deaver had been up there, and dried to the big boys. "Canvas-back Al," he was called these days. He was an easy man to buy. Al wouldn't get any fights if he didn't drive. Test? Al Deaver.

"Honest fight?" Her voice had and dry.

"Of course. Look, forget about that—that guy you saw. I'm not heading that way. And forget what Juan's friend tells you. If I start to lose, I'll quit. If I lose to the kind of stuff I'm fighting now, I'll quit the first time. Queer Street is not for me, baby."

"When you lose, you'll quit?"



"This year! That's a promise. Later, of course, a loss to a good man—that's something else. But if I drop out to any of the Punchin'-office I'm meeting now, I'm quit. And forget about that man."

Punchy started uncomfortably. Again he viewed his image in the mirror, saw the new tuam, the floppy ears, the flat nose. He lay on his back, staring at the ceiling for hours before he fell asleep.

Thursday morning, after Johnny had left, he heard her crying quietly in the apartment. It was a warm morning, and the stink from the river was unusually strong.

Punchy was disgusted. And though he didn't relish it, and couldn't afford it, he went out and bought a couple of quick ones at Turkey Joe's.

He got over to Redderty's a little late, and Redderty had some words regarding that Punchy took it weekly, and then went in to swab out the locker-rooms.

He didn't work out much that afternoon. Around three-thirty Johnny Gallagher worked out with an overweight warden, and Punchy watched them go. Too much on his face, this Johnny, and it was too easy to come in under their belt.

He got home before Johnny did. He was in his room when he heard Johnny coming up the steps.

Johnny sounded chipper. "Well, now it's official. I won Saturday night, it's mostly sure, from here on."

"Who told you that?"

"Mike Holliday."

Mike ran the Arcus.

"And you're going to win, Johnny?"

"I'm going to win."

Silence. Nothing but silence. Punchy went out to the Greek's for supper, and came home to silence. He was nervous, restless. He looked at himself in the mirror, and went to the window. A little later, he got the tobacco-um cut, and counted his money again.

It was too hot for May Saturday night, the lights around the Arcus attracted all the bugs in the neighborhood; outside, the flies gathered under the lights in shirt-sleeves, complaining about this ridiculous heat.

Punchy went up the steps to Mike's office.

Mike was sitting behind his battered desk, a fan going, a tall and sweating drink on the blotting-paper. Nick Perot stood near the front window, looking down at the street.

Punchy said, "Al Deever sent me a fix, and can't make it."

Nick turned from the window, frowning. He looked at Mike, and at Punchy, still frowning.

Mike smiled. "And you want to go six rounds against Johnny Gallagher? I'm surprised at you, Punchy."

"I'm in shape."

Mike looked at Nick.

Nick said quietly, "What else did Al tell you, Punchy?"

Punchy's smile was all-knowing. "Everything. Al told me every-

thing I don't have to go the whole six rounds if I get tired, do I?"

Mike's laugh was from the belly. Nick smiled and shrugged.

Then Nick said, "Not if you don't want to. I'll tell you what, Punchy. You give us the same kind of fight Al would have given us, you'll get the money. Otherwise, not a penny. That okay?"

Punchy hadn't gone six rounds for a couple of years. But maybe Johnny had never gone six rounds. It was likely he hadn't.

In the room with the other profan boys, Punchy dressed carefully, feeling a business in himself and a look of confidence. In the corner, talking to a couple of other boys, Johnny Gallagher looked to young. And so ready.

Nick came in and called Johnny out.

Punchy thought, The young ones like Johnny go up fast when Nick handles them. It's easy that way, until it's time for Nick's ace. Nick was so smart, making all the money, and not taking a single punch.

Johnny came back to him, eyes moving around the room. Then he came over to Punchy, and held out his hand.

"You're fighting for Al, huh?"

"That's right," Punchy smiled as he took the hand.

Johnny seemed puzzled. "Look, everything's okay, isn't it? I mean, it's all on the level?" He paused. "I heard some damned funny stories this week."

Punchy thought, "Well, somebody's split it. They know he's got to win, whatever. They have told him I've got to take a dive for him." Punchy wasn't fast on his

thoughts; he wasn't good at thinking at all, but he had been crooked. He could still be good at it, as good as he'd ever been, if he took the facts quickly, one at a time.

He drew his tongue and looked at Johnny and thought, "Hell, he just wants me to go through with the act. He's one of them—he's going to dumb an dirt. Well, son." Punchy thought he'd like to say to Johnny, "You dumb on stime if you want, but it's stappery."

Johnny didn't like the silence while Punchy was thinking. He looked anxious. He repeated, "Everything's all right, eh, Punchy?"

Punchy opened his mouth to speak. He saw the clean, fresh face of the kid, and found it hard to believe that this boy was out in on a dirty deal. Still, Johnny could be one of those kids who'd never known there'd been times and places where boxing wasn't crooked.

He said, "Sure, Johnny. Everything's okay. I'll be trying every second."

He saw the look of relief and pride that crossed Johnny's face. Then he realized that Johnny's only anxiety was that the fight was crooked. He realized Johnny didn't want a crooked fight. He wanted a good, straight fight, where his ability would win. The sucker! He didn't know much about Nick, or about Mike, or about boys like Punchy who'd gone in on the up-and-up and come out somehow.

He turned away to hide the hurt feeling he felt for Johnny, and he said, "Sure, everything's okay. I'll be trying every punch."

Johnny slapped him on the shoulder. "Good. Me, too," he said. "Let the best guy take it out!"

(Continued on page 72)



"Let me hear that part again where you threaten to quit if you don't get a substantial raise!"

Two-bit marshall

by Van Cort

Holliday lived his long-gone powdermake days in his dreams, and townsmen sneered — until the old man proved that the blazing guns of the past will roar for ever.

IN one respect Jack Holliday was remarkable. He had been a two-gun marshal at Emery in its roaring days and had lived to tell about it—he had too damned much about it, in the opinion of citizens urged to stand him drinks.

The town of old Holliday's time had faded, then grown into something else, but he had stayed, a shadow, still trying to recreate echoes of the past.

Originally it had been Emery's Creek, a business mining town roaring with the lust for life and gold. Now . . .

Had old Holliday died with his boots on he would have gone down in history as a legend. Had he even moved away and disappeared, his name would have been engraved with dancing letters upon the scrolls of Emery's past. As it was, the old man with the bottle and the too-ready tongue had already dismantled his own lust in the southwest's Hall of Fame. The cattlemen and cowboys who had brought the railroad with them had already begun to call him Jack Mealy, instead of Holliday, because of his frequent use of that phrase. "In my day," had become the signal for many a turned back.

Look in the yellowed dossier in the precincts down at the old county clerk's office and you'll discover that Jackson T. Holliday killed sixteen men in the course of his duty as peace officer at Emery's Creek, giving them all a chance to defend themselves. He made four hundred arrests and supervised twenty-six hangings.

There were a lot of people in Carl Thompson's office. Annabelle Cunningham and her father were there, and





Judge Moberty. There was a kind of air and expectation as the old man squared his frame into the doorway and looked for Carl.

"Bum," said Holliday, "could I see you for just a short moment?"

There was a table on the corner of Carl's desk, and a brand new sheriff's badge. The judge hesitated as Carl Thompson looked at him. "Just a moment, Judge," Carl said, and went to the door quickly. He stepped out into the corridor and walked a few steps with the old man.

"I'm a little short, son," the former marshal said. "I wonder if I could strike you for two bits. My bones are cold. In fact I need a drink."

"Sure," said the younger man. He produced a silver dollar and pressed it into the old man's bony palm. "Excuse me."

"Ber," the old man said, "this is too much. I didn't—"

As the old man walked out into the sunlight he didn't hear the judge say to Carl Thompson, "Carl, will you please come your right hand? Now, do you solemnly..."

Jackon T. happily crossed to Window's Corner and found he was at the bar but himself. Pat Garner was behind the mahogany. Pat took a look at the dollar and set up the bottle and spun a clown face off the sheet.

"Germoney ever already?"

"Germoney?" Holliday asked weakly.

Garner blundered "Yeah, Carl's gettin' mugged to shreds. Why, I thought—" He stopped, seeing the embarrassment in the older's faded eyes.

Holliday rolled a little. So that was it? That was why there were so many people in the office, the judge and Annabelle and Clark Cunningham. A few fellow he had been to forget to walk in for a touch and cut again, without as much as a thank you. The crowd of shams stood out on his forehead.

PEOPLE who saw him coming started out of his way. They knew what had happened. Drink always did that to Jackon T. He relaxed his gaze, he passed the town short for trouble, till he found someone to talk to. Probably some newspaper man who hadn't been put was yet.

Under the pretentious wooden awning, fringed with dry-rotted gingerbread trim, stood two strangers. One was middle-aged, one somewhat younger. They were dressed in new city clothes, were narrow from belts Holliday wheeled to a slow pace and looked them over.

"All right, gent," he said easily. "You're strangers in town. State your business and where you come from."

Amused expressions came to the strangers' faces. One had a small light beard, the other sported a fine set of handlike moustaches. Otherwise the deep were bland, smooth-shaven and clean. "Now that's very funny," said the bearded one. "What's the game?"

Holliday's voice never lost its

even timbre. "Mighty funny. You didn't answer my question. I'm waiting on you."

The bearded man gave Holliday a wide smile. "All right, all right, inter, but why might you be? Let's hear that first."

Holliday said with contempt, "Who do you think? Marshal of Emery's Creek."

They took in his lack of badge, his age, wrinkles, the odor of whisky that reached them. But they saw the guns, too, and the steady eyes.

As they made to move on Holliday's sharp voice halted them. "Just stay as you are. I asked you polite to register your brands. I'm still awaiting."

The man glanced around. "I'll show you—" He reached for his lapel with a motion Holliday could never mistake.

Holliday's right gun was in his fist, defying them. The stranger's fingers played a nervous tattoo on the lapel edge as their fist away.

"A little thing sometimes makes the information come a little willingly," said Holliday, and slammed a bullet into the boardwalk's rotten plank at the man's feet. His left came into action. Wood flew again from the plank walk.

The music was heard all over town, and people surged from the sheriff's office building.

A patrol trooper renamed Holliday's back and Carl Thompson's voice said, "All right, all right, Jackon T. Drop them! Drop them! That's enough of that!"

The word did something to Holliday. It cooled him, sobered his brain some and jerked him back to the present.

JACKSON T. HOLLIDAY went into the cell like a bird and beaten steel waiting for slaughter in the pen, and Carl couldn't look at him. He changed the gate shut happily and turned the key.

-do the outer back room Thompson put the paten on the desk and faced the two men. "Well, gentlemen, it's up to you to prefer charges." He opened the door and passed the pen.

"No, no," the older man said. "We don't want to prefer charges and leave ill-feeling. After all, the old hand was struck by the gun."

As three walked the old man swayed in his cell and which he held slowly. The door was open. Carl Thompson leaned against the frame. "Jackon T?" he said softly.

"What, son?"

"I'm driving the buckboard out to Cunningham's. Want to go?" Holliday shook his head and Carl said, "Well, anyhow, I don't want to leave you here. There were no charges. It's all over with. I'll let you out the back door."

Carl went to the back door and slid the bolts in the open doorway. The old man stopped. "My guns, Carl," he said.

"Mighty sorry, Jackon T."

AT four o'clock the stage left for Pine Junction. Jim Oliphant was the driver, and his old friend, Jackon T. Holliday, was the only passenger. Two horses were hitched

to the back of the coach to be delivered on the way.

At Apache Rock, five miles out of Pine Junction, Jim Oliphant pointed ahead to a band in the stage road. "Get some passengers after all," he said.

Two ranch hands were waiting, each with a bedridden suitcase at his feet. Oliphant pulled up the horses.

The two climbed into the small coach. A moment later the stage was under way again. The old marshal sat stiffly erect in his seat. His legs were moving as if he were talking to himself, but no sound came over them. Oliphant glanced at him. "Something bothering you, Holliday?"

The old man shook his head. "I reckon not."

But he was disturbed in the extreme. He had noticed these two Gons were the pretty beard and the set of moustaches. Gons were the respectable city clothes and the well-trimmed hair. The coach clothes were gross, rugged and well-worn.

They topped the last rise. In the distance came the whistle of the train and directly below them lay Pine Junction. Jackon T. Holliday leaned down and picked up the Winchester that lay the length of the back board. "This loaded?"

"Sure," said Oliphant with a surprised, startled glance, "but what the hell are you up to now?"

"Pull up!"

There was something in the older's voice which made Oliphant obey. The two men stuck their heads out of the coach. "Say, drive on! We'll miss the train!"

"This is as far as we go, gent," Holliday said, and dismissed his voice.

"I'll keep them here," said Holliday. "When I drop on them you cut in the station agent and telegraph a message back to Emery. Tell Sheriff Carl to head the posse here."

Oliphant started for the sheriff. Left alone Holliday was happy.

The two men's hands suddenly flashed for their guns and Holliday's rifle spoke. Once, twice, three times. Two men sat down, uncomfortable, all with straps and padding. Then all shooting stopped. But Jackon T. Holliday was by now lying on his back.

It seemed an endless time before Carl Thompson showed up with the posse. He had been at dinner at the Cunningham when word reached him that the bank had been robbed. At a quarter past four, the doctor had been seriously wounded. He was about to lead the loosely gathered posse in the wrong direction when Oliphant's wire came through.

Now he stared wonderingly down into the dying old eyes. The question was on his lips. How did you know? The lighter and it before it was spoken. He winked one eye. "The scheme worked," he said knowingly, for the benefit of those listening in. "Just like we figured. Instant, son. I never despise a bunch. I had them pegged right from the start. You see."





It Takes A Wild Irishman

Life was quiet for the Wild Irishman on the island—until the girl and her pursuers arrived. Then life became hectic.

VIC CORRIGAN, the Wild Irishman of Shag Island, ran a brown hand through his shock of red hair, came out of the shack at the back of the salt flat, and walked through the seige-grass to the beach.

A big man, he walked with the easy grace of the outdoor crew, slim, straight, flat-bellied, his hair flaring in the breeze from the sea.

He was half-way across the beach when he saw the launch go by: a big 60-foot job, a cabin cruiser, playthings of the Great Coast "millionaires" who spent their week-ends in the Bay, cruising in and out the island.

He stopped a moment and watched it slip past, its lights a reminder of another world, away from the confinement of Shag Island, where life was free and easy! Corrigan's life, the one he wanted, and the one he'd come back to after the thrills and lightning of the Western Desert and New Guinea.

After a while, the lights of the launch dimmed in the night, and Corrigan squatted down on the sand, setting the balls on some night lilies by the glow of a torch, his sand boots lapped by gentle wavelets across the flat where the whiting ran.

With the balls set, he waded out, fixed the lines to a stake on the bank, bopping for a flounder or two for his breakfast. Then he came back and hunkered down again to roll a leisurely cigarette.

He wondered idly what sort of crew were on the launch which had slipped into the night: pot-bellied buccaners, perhaps, with their expensive weapons and lots of grog; perhaps a fishing party from Brisbane or maybe a staid family group from Hamilton down for a cruising weekend. All sorts came to the Bay; some of them even came ashore to speak with Corrigan, the Wild Irishman of the salt flats.

He finished the cigarette, rose,

and turned back up the beach. A splash in the channel on the other side of the sand flat attracted his attention. He turned, could see nothing. A heavy fish, perhaps, or a shark plunging into a shoal of night whiting moving in to feed.

Then he heard the sound again; he stopped for a long time, tried to pierce darkness. There was a movement in the channel: a flash of phosphorescence as the water was disturbed.

Corrigan moved to the water's edge, and switched on the torch. The light broke up the darkness—and then he saw the woman, glimmering against the skyline as she rose to her feet and walked uncertainly through the shallows. She was nearly all in, and as he waded to meet her, she fell forward into a fast or so of water, floundering at Corrigan's feet.

He lifted her; helped her out, said:

"Fine night for a swim, chicken! Did you fall—or were you pushed?"

"Thanks." She gulped a lungful of air, and felt a lot better.

Corrigan looked at her in the torchlight: young, attractive and the shorts and nylon bloomers she wore clung wetly to her lovely form.

"You'd better come up the shack," Corrigan told her. "I'll put a brew on and you can hop into some dry things."

She didn't answer, but followed him across the salt flat to his shack. He pushed open the door, let her in, and lighted the lamp on the table.

She sat down, accepted a smoking and felt better still when she inhaled a lungful of smoke. She looked beautiful in the lamplight, and Corrigan's eyes roved over her appreciatively.

The beginnings of a smile flickered into her dark eyes.

"Okey, so you've seen me . . . Didn't you say something about a pot of tea and dry clothes?"

"Sure," grinned Corrigan. "Only

you don't always get that sort of scenery on Shag Island."

When the tea was made, he poured out a cup. She took it, rolling back the sleeves of a threadbare blue shirt Corrigan found for her. Then he tossed her an old pair of jeans, said:

"There. That's all I can do . . . 'cept you might try a pair of shoes in the corner there. Made of rubber last month. He was a little poky, with small feet. They might fit."

"Thanks again."

He hurried himself at the stove in the large room while she changed into the jeans. Her a quick gulp of the hot tea.

"Okey. St. Francis, you can turn round now . . . The tea's good, after that swim."

She finished the cup; he poured another.

"Now give me some! Why the midnight dive? Don't tell me they made you swim home?"

The smile that had been flickering in her eyes for the last ten minutes lit up her face now and humoured at last the set of her mouth.

"It wasn't that kind of a party. A hell of a lot worse than that, Mr. . . ."

"Vic Corrigan, man of 60 weeks! Shee Island's most appreciative citizen—the only one. And you, chicken?"

"Miss Hamilton."

She looked at him as if he should have known it, but there was no suspicion of recognition on his tanned, look-hard face.

He lighted a cigarette; rolled another for her.

"Come on, kid, spill to me! What sort of party was it, then?"

For a long time she didn't answer. Then she drew a deep breath, made up her mind, and looked right at him.

"A neck-the party," she said. "For me . . ."

He stared at her incredulously.



1

"I mean it," the girl went on. "I was lined up for an oil-drum, and wait around for ballast. You read the papers lately, or listened to the newscasts?"

"The papers only when the storm's hot comes in to the lighthouse on the far island. We not due until tomorrow afternoon. My rifle's in need of now better, so—You tell me, kid; it'll sound better that way."

"Well, I'm the key witness at the Big Joker's trial. His friends didn't want me to give evidence: the Big Joker's orders. So they took me for a key trip; broke into my flat last night, slipped a blanket over my head, and there it was."

"All the way down river I was kept a prisoner in the aft cabin; they didn't let me out till we were well down the Bay. Then they said I could have the run of the deck, didn't lock me up any more. There was no place to go—except over the side."

"It wasn't until we were passing these islands I realized there was a chance of escape. I was always a good swimmer, so I pretended to turn in early and then sneaked out of my cabin and dived well out over the stern while they were playing cards in the forward saloon."

"They?" queried Corrigan. "Who are these 'they' characters that keep cropping up?"

"Lee Bergen and Gus Starke; the Big Joker's men of all work... and every bit of a dirty."

"And the Big Joker?"

"Big time gambler, fier, and general go-brother. Left Malabar when the heat came on, geared up again as Brinsford. But now they've got the goods on him—if I reach the witness stand."

"Where did you fit in?"

"She dropped her gun."

"I was the syndicate's come-on. I'd been fed-up for a long while, and this looked like a way out. It nearly was—for sure!"

"How long will it be before they man you?"

"I don't know. They'll check up before they turn in, and that'll depend how long the card game lasts."

"I see."

CORRIGAN went to a rock behind the door, took down the heavy shark rifle that hung there, and filled the magazine from a box of cartridges.

"Vic, you think they'll—"

"If they man you, they might come looking. That'll help if they do."

He stood the rifle against the wall and went to the window, looked out across the Bay. In the distance he could see the lights of the launch upon... and knew all at once they were turning back.

"They've missed you," he said, softly. "They're coming back."

A little cry escaped her and she joined him suddenly at the window. The moon had risen now and was gently painting a silver track across the swell as the launch anchored in the channel, her riding lights twinkling up and down.

"So what now?" asked Corrigan.

"So nothing, I guess," the girl

answered heavily. "I can't drag you into this."

"I'm in," threw back Corrigan. "You try to keep a wild Irishman out of a fight, me darlint!"

He turned on an adventure began, and she smiled, looked into his crazy face.

"Thanks, Vic. A girl could use some help right now, at that."

He put the glasses on the cabin cruiser and saw two men board the dinghy that was tied to the stern. They were two big men, Corrigan saw, and he knew all at once they'd be Bergen and Starke.

They crossed the dinghy out from the cruiser's side, turned in to the beach, and began to pull. Corrigan could see them clearly in the moonlight.

"They're coming ashore, Blane."

There was something deep and healthy about him that was obvious in comparison with the lead-line pallor of Bergen, for instance, and the big bulkiness of Starke. Corrigan was a type new to her, and she found him immensely attractive.

Occasionally he flashed his torch as he made his way through the sedge-grass clumps and low tree-ferns scrub to the beach, and then he was out of sight as the beach fell away. I'm going down; see if I can head 'em off and me wild Irish blaney now. You stay here."

"Don't go. What? You don't know them like I do. You've never met that kid."

"I've been around... Don't worry, chicken; it gives you wrinkles. I'll talk to them, that's all. They've got no reason for getting tough with me."

She stood back from the door, and watched Corrigan's slim, but beautifully-built figure move with the grace of a hunter across the salt flat.

to the water's edge.

He could see the two men pulling up the dinghy on to the sand, and they looked up as he came across. They stood and stared him, standing easily, packing with hostility, waiting for him to speak.

Corrigan said:

"Good-night, there! You looking for fresh water?"

One of them, a big man with heavy shoulders, emphasized by the T-shirt he was wearing, looked up and down the beach.

"Who are you?" he asked, at last, in a voice sharp with antagonism.

"Vic Corrigan. I live here. Who are you?" His Irish temper couldn't resist the last bit.

"That doesn't matter, chum. We're looking for a girl."

"Aren't we all?"

"This girl fell off the yacht not an hour ago. Did she swim ashore here?"

"Hell, no! There's a strong current out there; chances are she wouldn't make it."

The other man, the shorter, beefy character, grinned and cut in:

"He'd make it; I've seen her swim... I told you that, Vic, but you would let her run round loose."

"Shut up, Starke! This guy's seen her all right. He's just stalling... What up, boy? Where is she?"



2



3



4

"I'll take it!"

She reaped a fortune...

FOR decades the Tomb of Eve in a cemetery near Jeddah, Arabia, was visited annually by thousands, who, after dropping a coin in a slot, asked and received a speaking tube. The fact that the Biblical Eve could talk to them and that she required a resting place 500 feet by 40 feet, did not tax the credulity of her patrons. When this alleged manuscript was ordered to be destroyed in 1937, the woman who had run the racket from an underground room redolent with a fortune. This was just another method of earning money from the pagans and can take its place among the other fantastic fables of the years, like setting the Brooklyn Bridge. It seems that the more fantastic the fraud is, the more likely it is to succeed.

"I tell you I—"

A gun appeared in Bergen's hand, shaded on Corrigan.

"Take us to her!"

"Now listen, you jokers, you can't come barging ashore like that, let tough guys, fishing rigs all over the shop. For two pins I'd—"

Again Corrigan's temper flared, but he fought it down. Time enough later to back up when the odds weren't so great. Bergen would pick him off at the first hostile leap.

"Okay, Corrigan!" The gun in Bergen's hand jerked authoritatively. "Back up and get moving. You must have a shack somewhere. If the girl's there, all right, you won't get hurt. Play it tough— and there's a slag here waiting."

He motioned Corrigan on. Fuming the Irishman led the way across the salt flats to the shack. The light was still burning, and he hoped the girl had enough sense to get out of the hut into the tattered wreck at the back.

Corrigan went in, looked round, and heaved a sigh of relief. The girl was gone, and so was the strait rifle and box of cartridges he'd left on the table!

"You little beauty, Corrigan thought. You know your way around, kid, and so help me, I like your code."

"See! No one here," he grinned, striding down.

And then he saw the wet marks on the floor where the girl had stood to change into dry things. He moved to cover them up with his shadow, but Starke shouldered him aside and pointed to the floor.

"You been swimming, Corrigan—or just experimenting yourself?"

Corrigan didn't answer, sat down again, and Starke backhanded him across the mouth. He leaped to his

feet, but Bergen's gun boomed into his chest.

"Easy, Blue," Bergen smiled sweetly. "You'd better get used to that. Where's the shaft—now?"

Corrigan dumfounded up, reached for the makings. Bergen's hand flickered out, slapped them out of Corrigan's hand to the floor and came back across Corrigan's other cheek.

"You're mighty glibly slipping jokers down with a duck tail of gun, Bergen. Put 'em up and—"

Bergen cut him short.

"Look, son, you've got no chips in this game. There's no sense coping a cuning when all you've got to do is to come clean with the bluff. Wise up, maybe boy... we haven't got all night."

"Go to hell!"

Starke seized his own gun.

"Okay, sonny-boy, you asked for it."

He reversed the gun to crush the butt into Corrigan's face. The Irish man braced himself for the shock of it, and then the girl's voice came from the open door:

"All right, Starke, chop out the piece whomever! It isn't his rifle!"

"No!" Starke backed away, and the girl came into the shack, holding Corrigan's shark rifle at her hip. She moved it to cover Bergen as well and Corrigan said:

"You shouldn't've come back, Blue."

"Drop that gun, Bergen—you too, Starke! Drop 'em, or by gorry, I'll—"

And suddenly Bergen began to laugh—a low, throaty chuckle with sodium in it.

"Blame, honey, you're one half of a girl! It's you you're talking to, remember? Is Bergen—the Big Joker's chopper man?"

And again he went off into that evil shuckle. It edged under Corrigan's nerves and a shiver ran up his back.

"I said drop it, Bergen... now!"

The girl raised the muzzle of the heavy rifle. It roared as Bergen squeezed the trigger of his automatic. The big slug from the rifle slammed past Bergen's ear and the shock of it split his eardrum.

London fingers plucked at the girl's skirt, but came no closer.

Then Corrigan leaped, hammered left and right into Bergen, and roared at the girl:

"Outside, Blue, and fast!"

She flung herself out the door and Corrigan was on her heels as Bergen dropped. A shot from Starke's gun breasted him across the neck just as he slammed the door of the shack.

"Straight ahead, Blue! Make for the 6-trus swamp!"

She ran on into the darkness.

Corrigan at her side.

"Thanks, kid," he said. "That



"All right, all right then, so it was a chestnut-sided warbler."



"Remember now . . . none of your fancy business."

was good work back there. Fly that slug didn't shut Bergen's face for good."

He took the rifle from her, went on one knee, and pumped two shots into the door of the shack.

"What now, Vic?" she girl asked.

"We cut across the swamp, to the other side. I've a dinghy round where I cross the channel, in to the other island. There's a lighthouse there. If we make it, we've got till the store boat comes."

They ran on, into a thicket of low ti-tree and started meadow-sweet. It was wet underfoot, leading into the shallow salt-water swamp, haunts of wild pigs and wallabies.

"They'll follow us, Vic. You know that, don't you?"

"I know it. But in here we've got a chance."

IN THE DISTANCE behind them, he could hear Bergen calling to Starke as they entered the swamp. Corriean stopped, listened . . . the girl stood close to him.

He put an arm around her and she rubbed her cheek against his face.

"They've separated, we don't . . . to cover both sides of the swamp."

"Is it quicksand here?"

"No, just shallow melon-holes and water. Come on, kid, let's get cracking."

They moved deeper into the swamp, squelching through the melon-holes, trying to step on to the bits of harder ground that, strangely, seem to spring out of the holes themselves. On these grew clumps of sedge-grass.

Force black mosquitoes descended on them in keeping clouds: long-legged little black swamp-devils that could penetrate even through a shirt. Corriean rubbed his hand over his face, and felt them there like a soft, hideous hair.

"One thing, Vic," she girl gasped. "Starke and Bergen are getting them, too."

Corriean broke a branch from a shrub, handed it to her.

"I'll keep 'em off a bit, Blaise."

It was some help. It broke up the bunches of them, kept them away from her head.

She strode on. Corriean at her side. Once she stumbled and fell face down in the clump of a melon-hole. Corriean helped her to her feet, she fell against him.

"You all right, chicken?"

"Sure, just wet, blown—and plain mad."

He laughed, raised her face, kissed her muddy mouth.

She laughed with him and said:

"Worry I can't do better, boy; all you got was a mouthful of mud."

He was amazed again by the vital spirit of her, and he knew a sense of comradeship he hadn't believed possible in a relationship with a woman. Perhaps it was the fact that they were now in the same predicament. Perhaps it was because they were the same devil-may-care type, with a fighting clan that would never let them call quits.

However you liked to work it out, Corriean knew in that one moment of clear thought that Blaise Hendon, whatever she was, whatever she'd been, was his kind of woman.

They stumbled on through the melon-holes, making for the other

sides, to the beach where Corrigan kept the dinghy he used to cross the channel, to the other island where the lighthouse stood as a symbol of safety, to them now as well as to stopping.

Suddenly he stopped, motioned to the girl for quietness.

"Somebody's coming!" he whispered. "Maybe one of them's out across our tracks. Down, Blase . . . as this thicket!"

She listened, too; somewhere in the swamp behind them there were sounds of a busy moving through the thickets, splashing through the main-banks.

Corrigan aimed up the shark rifle; minutes went by. The splashing grew louder. He peered through the leaves, and then suddenly laughed. A wild pig scuttled away into the undergrowth of mangrove seedlings, a little ruffled porcupine trotting away on palmying hooves.

"A pig!" the girl said. "Oh, Vic, it was only a pig!"

The friendly note in her voice warned Corrigan inside, and again he felt that wonderful feeling of naughtiness.

He stood up, and moved on again, the girl at his side.

And all at once, coming with the darkness of a whip crack in the mist dark, a shot crashed from a thicket by the side of the muddy track.

But Corrigan had felt the shock of the sling in his left shoulder a split second before he heard the shot. He staggered, fell to one knee—and saw Starke's grinning at him, an automaton in his head.

"Didn't think I'd make such good time, did you, Corrigan?" Starke

asked. "I was proud in this kind of country as a kid!" He chuckled like a pleased boy. "You should've thought about the pig, then! You heard me coming—and then thought it was the pig . . ."

It was all very funny. He raised the gun to finish Corrigan off—and the girl screamed.

On one knee, facing from the hip, Corrigan sent a slug from the shark rifle into Starke's middle. His face went all white and surprised, and he tumbled suddenly, going face down in the mud.

"That's a job, too, Starke!" and Corrigan between his teeth. "Only this time it's on you."

"Vic, are you all right?"

Blase had his face in her hands.

"Smashed my left shoulder, Blase.

She'll be right! Let's hope those

shots don't hurt Borgan back."

"Let me see it."

She ripped a sleeve out of the shirt she was wearing and with strips from it she contrived to band the injured arm across his chest. He stood up, bandaged the rifle in her.

"I can walk all right, but you'll have to carry the rifle."

His legs felt weak, and he knew he was losing blood, but he didn't say anything to her. She put her left arm round him and somehow they stumbled on.

"How much farther, Vic?"

"Maybe a half a mile, Blase. I'm

not sure. I generally go round the

beach."

He wondered where Borgan was, hoped against hope he was lost somewhere in the swamp. A shot steamed in front of his eyes, but he forced it away. His legs were weaker than ever now, and he

could feel a shivering weakness taking command of his body.

The blood was coming down his upper arm, and he could feel it dripping off his elbow.

HE SLAPPED and fell; the girl came down with him.

The shock sent a jolt of pain through him, and he lay back in the mud and water, his head against a tussock of waving grass.

"There's a handkerchief in my trouser pocket, Blase . . . This wound needs plugging."

She undid the rough bandage.

The wound was clean enough, a straight hole drilled clear through, but blood was coming freely.

The girl folded the handkerchief into a tight pad, forced it against the hole and bound it in place with more shirt strips. Then she again strapped his arm across his chest.

"That's all I can do, Vic," she

told him. "Can you make it now?"

"Sure, kid. Just give the old

crack a hand."

She almost lifted him to his feet, and he was amazed at the strength in her. She half-carried, half-dragged him on through the mud.

A breeze spring up suddenly from the north-west. It was now cooler—going. The wind came through the swamp and as it grew stronger it lessened the evil of the black swamp mosquitoes.

A bank of cloud drifted across the moon's face. Corrigan was pleased. If Borgan were waiting on the beach, there would be less chance of his seeing them as they made their way across the strip of sand to the sticks at the water's edge to which Corrigan's dinghy was tied.

(Continued on page 89)



"Notice how well she carries herself? I like that in a person."

CODE

OLAK, the White Phantom wolf king, whined to the aid of his black wolf mate, Mayak. His fangs dripping red blood on to the snow, Olak savagely attacked a member of an intruder pack which had come down to raid on his range. They were members of the pack of Ussur, the big black timber-wolf, a bitter rival of Olak.

Mayak was down, two of Ussur's fanged hellions at her throat; but she fought with valiance and with strength and speed that were amazing, considering her condition. Before long, she would retire to the den to bring forth the season's litter of younglings.

Four of Ussur's pack-members had beset the black mate of Olak, while the White Phantom was absent hunting. He had heard his mate's faint cry of distress and had no time getting to her aid; now, with all the savagery in his great fighting heart, he leunched himself into attack.

A keen, barren she-wolf coiled and dashed at his beautiful white throat. Her fangs cut through his fur and skin, and now his handsome breast was stained a dirty brown.

Olak sprang sharply, as if to red his nostrils at the distasteful thing of his enemy. He bounded to one side as the she-wolf reached again for him but overshot. As swift as chain lightning, Olak coiled inside and struck. . . .

HAROLD CRICKSHANK
• FICTION



OF THE FANG

Olok, the white wolf, could not know that these superstitious man-creatures regarded him with awe, and were his protectors . . . in a sense.

It was the end for this grumbled old member of Uman's pack. Olok's blood had been freed by an instinctive sense of the wide code, when the creatures of his kind must respect the condition of such as Mayek.

As the intruder she-wolf lay bleeding, Olok chopped stiffly about her, his bloodied fangs bared, his hackles up. Truly, he assumed proportions that were worthy of his kinship. Two of the raiders crouched, wounded, off into the scrub. . . . Two, including the sleek she-wolf, would never again go bounding down the burn-trails like wraiths in the starlit winter nights.

Shortly Olok minced to his favourite slab of rock, his look-out position. He raised his head, thrusting his muzzle high, to give out a long and powerful wail of victory and of warning. It was a cry which penetrated the frost-dog, to reach the ears of the man-creatures at the cabin by the springs. . . .

Tak Cramen, his wife Netan, and her strapping Indian brother, Tan, cocked their heads sharply. Tak and Tan were dressing down the pole of handcarve horse-traces which young Tan raised in a compound between the cabin and the spring.

"Olok!" Tan roared. "It is him I tell you. Tan! Those four wolves of Uman's pack must have come

close to the den of the great white one. . . ."

Tan nodded, and resumed the fastening of a trace.

Netan stared wide-eyed at her husband. Her full bosom rose and fell sharply. The Cramens and Tan had been "neighbours" of the White Phantom and his mate and kindred for many seasons here in this grim and desolate Moham country.

When the White Phantom called, it was either for laughable good or bad. To these man-creatures, Olok was an unusual creature whom they respected and, in a sense, feared, because of his white coat. Despite their man-and-horse training, they could not rid their minds of the superfluities of their ancestors. To them—secretly, if not openly—Olok, the White Phantom, was favoured of the gods of the wilderness; they had long since learned to identify his calls, and they heeded them.

"Had you better not go and see, leave one!" Netan asked her husband in her soft Cree Indian tongue.

Tan slowly shook his head. "No. When Olok calls as he did, all is well," he answered. "Tomorrow, out on my trapline, I shall call in close to the den, and check. Aye! But it will be bad if Uman brings all his pack down. They will rob our traps, and—again! Mayek's saying. . . . She and the white one will have to be careful."

A DOG FOX barked huskily from the compound. This started a wild cacophony of sounds. Tan was instantly alert. This was a delicate time of the year for his she-horse; the vicious could not stand too much confinement.

Pulling on a parka, Tan moved out of doors and walked quickly in the sharp night to the compound.

He whistled softly, and a beautiful silver fox whapped about to point his sharp muzzle at Tan. Shortly there was quiet at the gate. Tan talked softly to his champion, there were some very valuable coloured horn-tyres he had discovered by long seasons of careful breeding and attention.

Tan was proud of his fangs; he knew that Corporal Dan Martin of the Mounted—his friend—would be very proud when next he called, on patrol. It was Martin who had helped young Tan get his first start in his business of fox-raising, for the corporal had brought in Hareton to study.

Suddenly Tan whirled. The silver dog-fox bounded to the peak of his pen and thrust his muzzle high, to bark in his rasping voice-tones. Out of the west there came a long and

powerful wolf-call. "Gee!" Tan gasped. His eyes blazed in the starlight.

Game was in short supply. It was the low ebb of the cycle in the reinist ranks. Deer and moose had gone to parks, forced there by extra heavy snows; a blinding was on the verge of Olok. . . . Uman was a bold adventurer, a ruthless big-fanged black. Small wonder that Tan quivered with misgiving. More than once such creatures as Uman had invaded the compounds, to destroy valuable fangs, in winter-time.

Tan strode back to the cabin, where he gave out the information that Uman was close in. Tan's almost-black eyes glared as he signified to himself. "It might be bad for my trapline, brave one," he said. "Ook, too, for the dogs. You will have to watch closely."

Tan stayed up late, almost until the dawn light began to filter through the pall of the dense frost-dog. He shuffled at the compound as he heard the skeleton business in nearby covers crack their frost-battered "bones". But reassurance came when again he heard the long, high-pitched wail of Olok, the White Phantom; the great white wolf king was alert and Tan knew that, if hard pressed, Olok would call in his powerful son, Tan, and the pack.

With this comforting thought in mind, Tan moved back to the shack, and straggled to his bunk. . . . while the thin light of dawn slowly struggled to nudge aside the gloom of lingering night. . . .

MAYEK brought seven young-lings to the world. Olok squaddied the entire home-range area diligently. He was hard pressed to find and kill enough food for his own needs and for Mayek's maintenance. His hands heaved off and his belly growled hollow. Many times he saw the sign of his hated rival Uman, and the black's pack members; but alone, Olok wisely gave the tracks a wide berth.

He pushed softly into the heavily brushed draws, where he was successful, now and then, in snatching a stuffed grouse or food hen-grouse. Freshly, he brought a whole, untouched hard-baked to Mayek, laying the warm, feathered one just inside the entrance to her den. Now and then he cocked his head at the den aperture and listened to the ramblings and mewlings of his and Mayek's new litter. His hackles rose and fell, rose and fell, and he gasped soft, gutted sounds as he stretched himself close by to rest, before





"Well, now to see if you sound as good as you look."

to a farther creek, where beavers had recently begun new collections.

He wrinkled his nose to catch the various scents wafting on the winter breeze. He was searching for danger signs, for every now and then he had come across Uman's scent—scent planted, as 'was the habit of the wolf-kind, on bushes and rocks, or against stumps. . . . But there was no fresh sign here at the Beaver Dam, no scent that overtold that tantalizing musky swirl of heaven.

Clank cocked his head. A creature was stirring off his right front. He slowly turned his head, and his lips drew back to expose his fangs in a sharp grin as he glimpsed a big beaver at work on a fallen log near the big lodge.

Stark was being stripped by the strong currents of the fast-begging flood down, belly down, fish began to steal forward. He kicked his chops from time to time as he swung wide, left. Now he lay flat behind a clump of poplar saplings which grew right through the domed roof of the big lodge, which was suspended to the stream proper by a skifflike cut channel.

With infinite patience, the White Phantom watched Aarnuk, the beaver, at his feeding. Now the big male beaver turned and blinked his small black eyes as he stretched himself and, seated, his flat tail bracing him, began to row his wheel.

Here and, with his claws, comb out his coat.

Still Clark made no move. He quivered within himself as he waited waited.

Now old Akhrick dropped to all fours. There was a sudden resounding clap from the creek, where another adult heron had been swimming. The warning slap of a broad tail on the water startled both Qlak and Akhrick.

Abnuck at once coiled and started to scurry on toward the protective stream, but had to pass within half a rod of the crunched White Phosphorus. Click stretched and struck

He was rocked on to his haunches as, like lightning, old Ahnruk started his race with those terrible beaver incisors. Gasping Osk again rushed, and this time Ahnruk had no time to turn and strike. Osk's fangs had struck him sharply, powerfully, in the zone of the neck.

It was a sharp and terrible mill-rag; but, in her desperation, Chick could not pass up this opportunity. Ahimsa was big and fat; Maybuck, at her den, was waiting for food, so her youngsters craved their heavy toll. Chick dashed and began to up the heavy furry hide from the beaver-floes. He belched repeatedly as he gulped the well-flavored, fatty meat. Nor did he cease until his growling, grumbling belly had ceased to complain.

State was underwritten by a group of

his responsibility for the welfare of his reeds at this early spring season. He licked his chops, fastened a strong fang-bolt in the heavy remains of the beaver carcase, and turned to move along his home trail.

He had gone no farther than half a mile when all at once he dropped the knife, and spun, to scotch his back as he saw the two members of Darrach's pack trailing him.

THE DARK gray wolves were young dog-woves with no responsibilities—hungry creatures at large. They had not the wisdom nor the fighting experience of the great White Phantom wolf king; yet they represented a great threat, because they outnumbered Chik two to one. He was crossed by two desires; there was his instinctive sense of faithfulness to his mate; there was the fighting desire to gain battle for the benefit of his mate.

He bowed his large and rounded back a pace or two toward the intruders. His tail was high at the base, and jerked like a dog-dog's. His nostrils moved and his breast coat fluffed out. Clay assumed proportions far greater than his natural size.

One of the dark proys suddenly swung, to go tearing in around Olek. He had the beaver crosse in his jaws when the White Phalarope whirled and charged.

The light was on!

Clark wanted no time fidgeting or
boiling; he sensed that this must
be a short, speedy encounter. As
the wolf with the heavier harness
in his jaws whirled, to make a
break, Clark spun and struck. His
fingers cut through hide and flesh
and ripped downward with a powerful
jerk of the white one's neck
muscles.

Blood spouted. The heavy beaver
arrows dropped to the snow. Again
Gibb drove. There were large
wounds into one of his rear thigh
muscles before he finally overrode
the last wolf's barrier.

Now he whirled, spinning the second man under from him. The off-side rear limb buckled under him. His muzzle was cut. Before he could recover and thrust, the dark grey had whipped away to the cover of the brush. . . . He sat there, at a discreet distance, watching. Oh! the white one, and in an emergency to look him round.

Now Osk shuffled his wounded limb deep into a small patch of cold snow, until he was satisfied that bloodstains had ceased.

He ruminated about the dead wolf a time or two before moving to knoll, an old beaver-dam, there to cock his swank high and pour out a long, high-pitched wail. It was a call that reached the ears of Mayak at her den. . . . It was a call heard by other wilderness creatures. . . .

Nearby, in the brush, his tongue
lolling and his chops drooping, the
gray wolf watched with baleful
stare. He would have leapt, but not
the succulent heaver. The best
would be cannibalistic, for he would
rip and tear at his brother's carcass
as the White Plutonium moved on,
carrying the heaver on to the den
of his mate. . . .



"... Give her soft lights and a portable radio and she'll occupy any place!"

As he neared the den, Olak whipped to the cover of scrub brush. He had glimpsed the man-eaters. . . .

Tuk Cranes shuffled on to the Beaver were in close season to all he reached the beaver-den and the lodge, and saw the sign of a big beaver kill. He shook his head. Beaver were in close season to all trappers.

"Ayah!" Tuk gasped. He had protected Ahmuk and his kind for many seasons, watching them multiply. Tuk looked forward to taking a few pelts again when the season opened, but sadly he stared down at the torn fur and hide of old Ahmuk.

"Uweh! Mucha Seta!" he swore in the Cree tongue.

It was well he charged Uweh with the kill, for he would have been doubly punishing him, he knew that Olak, the White Phantom, had been responsible. . . .

BACK AT his mate's den, Olak dropped the beaver and thrust his nose deep into the den entrance. Shortly, her backer up, her lungs heaved, Mayak snarled as she approached the feast. Olak grunted and leaped away, to settle himself to rest. His nose quivered as from time to time the fragrant, musky odour of the beaver touched his nostrils as Mayak savagely tore the flesh from the bones.

Now Olak's eyes began to blink. Ears cocked, he settled to rest, to nap, while the sun strengthened and the soft east-westerly breeze horizontalized remaining snow-patches.

High overhead, the whirr of wings faintly ceased. The first of migratory birds were in full flight north. Soon would come the hooting of the wild geese and the cries of the winter swans, with now and then the more numerous calls of the few remaining transient swans.

Olak shuffled his body into a position of greater comfort, yawned prodigiously, and lay over, to rest while, seated on her haunches at

the den entrance, her belly now well filled, Mayak, the beautiful big black, sat on guard. . . .

THE TRUE spring burst on the wide with amazing suddenness. Songbirds had returned; sap-filled trees were blowing up their buds, and the first green grass-shoots were pushing aside the dead, dry grass of last year.

Hot sun flooded the desolate wastes, laying alive upon the hard wrought by the grim winter. But at times went on, Olak, the White Phantom, became more restless. He started every time a gust of night wind caused a sinister, slightest blanching of the dry grasses.

This evening, following many hot days, thunder grumbled. A flash of lightning to westward decided him. Throughout the night he sat and watched the play of sheet and fork lightning along the crest of the westerly hills.

There was no dew with day-break—an ominous sign.

Came a close-in crash of thunder! Mayak had pushed her youngsters to the outside. She joined them, her muzzle high. There was no sign of rain.

Another dazzling flash of lightning cut through a single mass of low cloud stream to the north-west. The flash was attended by a smashing volley of thunder which sent the whelpings scurrying to their mother's side.

Suddenly Olak sprang to all fours, and reared to a peak of land. He flung his head high, and his nose quivered. Mayak swung on her stern, to watch her mate; and then, over all the wild range, rang the long-drawn wail of the White Phantom. It was a warning. Smoke had touched his nostrils with its dried, scalding tang.

A freak, reckless electric storm had pulled around the hills all night. Its lightning had ripped into the tinder-dry punk of deadfalls at the edge of a tamarac swamp, and now, almost before Mayak could join her mate, smoke was visible. . . .

Several times Olak and his mate had experienced the mad ravages of spring or autumn bush fire, their most deadly enemy, the most deadly enemy of all creatures of the wilderness. The White Phantom did not panic. He turned his head, with muzzle cocked, to sniff sharply as to determining the true wind-direction. Now he spun, ran his muzzle along Mayak's flank; then, wheeling, he raced on toward the north-west.

Does had not yet dropped their down. A male deer doe dashed by Olak, her necks down and out. She was in the position for the moment she had lots of time to make her way to the safety of the lake, to eastward, but, in her condition, she was perished.

Olak stood a moment or so and watched her until the brush closed behind her.

Now he glimpsed an old bull moose standing at full height, head turned toward the scene of the lightning's damage. Soon Moosewa might be galloping at full stride toward the lake, but for the time being he was glaring at the ceiling angles.

Now Olak watched a tongue of flame break from the smoke. A wind gust, whipping the tongue out flat, stirring up the red embers of the punk, scattering them over the dry grass of a ridge. . . .

Then, quickly, the fire flamed out and the smoke wined stilled. . . . Olak sat on his haunches, his lips working sharply in strange grimaces.

A buck deer came bounding up out of a shallow dene, snorting as he bounded along in full flight. Suddenly there was a terrific roar as the heated air crossed a local eddy of powerful wind, whirled the fire a point to westward. It was then Olak spun and drove back to his den mate.

The seven whelpings were without understanding. As Olak and their mother began to snuffle them forward, they tumbled and rolled, to paw and play. Olak seized a lanky little dog whelp in his jaws and trotted off with him, setting him down a couple of hundred yards nearer the two-miles-distant lake. He returned for another. Progress was slow, but the progress of the fire was swift now. The sun was blotted out and the wilderness, so recently adorned in the first sign of spring glory, reverted to a scene of desolation and despair.

Animals of every species moved by. A black bear and lumbering twin came into sight. The old she halted, to turn her head and snarl gutturally at the wolf family. Olak paid her no heed.

All at once he froze in his tracks, a whelp in his jaws, as he heard the sound of footsteps at his right rear. Now he spun, to glimpse man-creatures. He quivered in every nerve-fiber, but no harm came to him. . . .

TUK CRANES and Ten were out, seeking. They were looking for a suitable area at which to commence back-firing.

Tuk halted, cackling at Ten's snarl. "Ayah! But look, brave and ill, the white one, an' her family.



NOTICE. "ay" means, because there is more than one in our solar system. For hundreds of years it has been known that several of our nine planets have moons, or satellites. They were all thought to be like our own moon, lumps of dead matter without atmosphere, but, in 1943, it was reported from photographs that one of the nine satellites of Saturn, named Titan, had an atmosphere. Titan had been discovered in 1655, but it took so long to find out it had an atmosphere. Titan is the sixth satellite from Saturn and it is only 1,000 miles in diameter, which is about a third the size of Earth. Its temperature is less than 340 degrees below zero. Titan has bare and jagged mountain peaks, with oceans at their bases. It is about 790 million miles from the Earth and 771,000 miles from Saturn. Incidentally, Mars has but two satellites, while Jupiter has twelve. Earth's only satellite, which we call the moon, is never farther away from Earth than 238,710 miles and never closer than 221,463 miles, which distances are much smaller than Titan's from Saturn.

... One more thing about it is said we cannot help them with those young ones. . . ."

Glak moved on, watched by the men. He looked past them again, on his way back for another whelp. Then suddenly Tan called to Tuk. "Look! To the right, north. Usmn, the black, an'—ay—ay!"

Tan pointed to five wolves of the stranger pack.

Tuk straightened his shoulders. In spite of the gravity of the situation, he would have shot Usmn and his followers, but Tuk was armed only with an axe.

"He is the wolf one, Tan!" Tuk whispered huskily. "I am afraid

for the white one an'—"

A terrific roar from the gathering forces of the fire cut Tuk short. "We begin the backfire, great one?" Tan asked.

Tuk hesitated. "We begin, but Tan, Glak, Mayek, an' the rest of the young. . . . We must find out where they get, an'—destroyed we could destroy them. I go. Be ready!"

Tuk found Mayek nudging along three whelps. She watched and bared her fangs as he came within a few rods of her. The tang of the smoke in her nostrils had made it impossible for her to catch his scent.

Tuk backed away. Now as he

turned to rejoice Tan he gasped at a wall of flame rose like a high tide of red death. Poured by a sudden blast of wind, it rose, surging, to smash against a belt of mixed evergreen and deciduous timber. . . .

Tuk staggered and spun, in hurry back to Tan. "We move quickly toward the west, Tan. There is no more time. Come!"

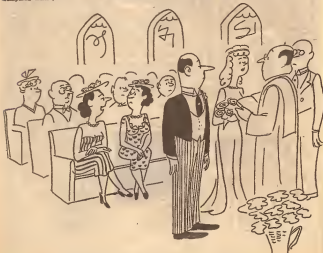
Hardly they were touching off dry grassed grass, beating out flame, tracing the backfire to creep against the wind, in a widening circle, as they struggled against the smoke fumes to save their home area. They must get a backfire line around to join the creek to the south of their home yard; but they realized that their struggles could, in a single puff of wind, be all in vain. . . .

AT THE throat of encirclement by the backfire, Mayek was forced to scree a whelp and rush to find Glak. She was obliged to leave two of the whelps behind. Now she and Glak whipped back together. . . .

But as they neared the young ones a dark form flashed to the brush. It was the great form of Usmn. . . . Again, the code-breaker. A small whelping lay stretched out in death.

Together, Mayek and Glak raised hackles and bared their terrible fangs.

(Continued on page 21)



"They met in a bank. He dropped his book face up."



"Keep until your ship comes in? Absolutely, I mean?"



Hell in his Holsters

He was a man who wore his heart in his holster; a man who thought with steel and powder he held in his hand.

THE rainclouds had gathered suddenly, the way rainclouds do in this inland of the Panhandle country. Heavy black folds of them rolled in from the north and hid away the face of the sun. The short grass that had been pasture in the September heat only a few minutes ago was now in cool shadows.

Noah Parker stood in the open doorway of his barn and sniffed the smell of rain on the first hot drops smacked the dry earth, squirting up little clouds of red dirt. There would be no more ploughing today.

The drops were falling faster now. A sudden crash of thunder rent the clouds, and a gray sheet of rain started down. There is something relaxing and peaceful about rain that is almost hypnotizing at times. Noah stood in the open doorway, looking and listening.

Slowly, in a ghostly sort of way, a figure began to take shape there in the progress. Noah grunted and stared hard. After a while he could make out the shape of a horse, and then the rider. The rain did not seem to bother them. The horse moved lazily across the field that Noah had been ploughing a few minutes before. The rider sat erect, his head held up so that the flashing rain cut across his face.

It seemed that it took them a long time to cross the newly ploughed furrows. The horse stopped carefully over each one. The rider sat motionless. After they had crossed the ploughed ground the horse kept in the direction of the barn.

Noah Parker stayed where he was, under the shed. He had a feeling that if he went out in the rain to meet them he would be making a fool of himself, that the horse and rider were not real at all, that it was some kind of trick the rain was playing with his eyes.

It was not a trick. The horse was a big black, gleaming from the rain. As they moved closer Noah made out the rider. He was a big man. He sat easily in the saddle, in the way of men who spend more time on horses than on the ground. But there was something about his face. It was a quiet face, almost white, and the cold rain had no effect on it at all. Noah looked at it closely and got the feeling that he had seen

it before. It was the face of a killer—and the thought struck Noah that a killer never wins.

A long time ago, maybe. It was like looking at a man's face that you don't remember as a man at all, but a boy. The horse stopped in front of the barn and the rider looked down.

"Mister," he said, "we and my horse have come a pretty good way. We'd be much obliged if you could see your way clear to let us use your barn for tonight."

His voice was soft. The words were hardly audible over the hammering of the rain.

"Sure," Noah said. "You're welcome to the barn. . . ." He stopped.

The stranger dropped the reins he had been holding and grasped the saddlehorn. He looked up and seemed to notice the rain for the first time. Then he pitched forward, sort of rolled on the neck of his horse, and fell on to the wet ground.

"I'll be darn' . . ." Noah Parker felt his mouth drop open stupidly. The stranger lay motionless, and Noah watched as the rain splashed red mud on the white face. "I'll be darn'!" he said again. Then he shut his mouth, rushed out into the rain, got his hands under the big man's shoulders, and pulled. When he made it back under the shed Noah hurried back to the door and yelled.

"Laura! Laura, come out here, to the barn!"

When he went back, Noah looked the stranger over carefully. He was wearing blue jeans pants—that is, they were blue except from the knee down on the left leg. On the angle of the leg where the rain hadn't got to it, it was red.

Noah got his pocket-knife and slashed the pants. He grasped the leg light in his big hands and held it until he heard his daughter at the barn door.

"I need a piece of cloth," Noah said quickly, without looking around.

There was a little gasp of surprise. That was all. Then a rustle as she lifted her skirts, and a tearing sound. Noah took the cloth over his shoulder and made it tight above the wound. Laura didn't ask questions. She said quietly, "I'll go back and get blankets and hot water."

He didn't have long to wait until Laura got back. She put hot water and blankets beside the stranger and knelt down. Noah turned the job over to her.

She didn't speak until the job was done. Then she stood up and pushed at some hair that had fallen down on her forehead. "Any other man would have been dead. Do you know who he is?"

Noah shook his head. "They came up about the time the rain started, him and that black horse." He tried to think, but he shook his head again. "I don't know."

Laura knelt again and went through the stranger's pockets. She found what she was looking for in his shirt, a long, soaked-leather wallet, the kind Mexicans make. She opened it and stared at it a long time before she said anything. Then she held the wallet up and Noah took it. "Well, anyway, we know now who he is," she said.

The name was told in the leather. There were a lot of funny words and a couple of words in Spanish too, but it was the name that jumped out at Noah Parker: *Tail Camaron*.

That name meant a lot of things. "Tail Camaron, Wanted for Murder." "One Thousand Dollars Reward, Dead or Alive." Those things flashed through Parker's mind, but these were small things. Small compared to what the name meant to him.

There had been Camarons in Arizona. That's what the name meant to Noah Parker. He looked hard at the big white-faced stranger and tried to think. . . . Say a long time ago there had been somebody you didn't like. Say there had been a fight, a big one, the kind they have in Arizona. A man is dead. You didn't kill him, but what's going to happen now? They'll pin you for murder, and they hang you for that. The only thing to do is leave, in a hurry, and find some place where

CLIFTON ADAMS
•
FICTION



nobody knows YOU.

That's what Noah had done. It wasn't an easy kind to live up; only the strong got by there. His wife hadn't been strong. Now there was only Laura, and himself—and a big white-faced guy named who wasn't a stranger, after all.

Maybe somewhere in the back of his mind Noah knew that sooner or later he would run across somebody who would recognize him. But he hadn't expected it to be like this. He hadn't expected to be this lucky.

He borrowed the wallet in the palm of his hand. "A thousand dollars riding right up to our back yard," he spoke to himself. He had even forgotten that Laura was there. "A thousand dollars, alive—or dead."

THERE was only one thing to do. Noah couldn't afford to have anybody alive who knew him or who knew where he was. The thousand dollars was just a bonus.

Laura looked at him for a minute, then she looked at the big outlaw. "You're going to turn him in?" she asked quietly.

It wasn't the question so much that made Noah think something was wrong, but the way she asked it. It was almost as if she had said, "You're not going to turn him in?"

Noah looked at her for a long minute and tried to figure what he saw in his daughter's face. He couldn't be sure. "He's a killer," he said firmly. "Not more'n a week ago he killed a marshal in White Rock."

"Because the marshal was a thief," Laura cut in with that quiet voice of hers. "Working for Spade Randal, chasing the farmers off their land because Randal wants it

for his cattle." The words rushed out. She took a deep breath and looked amazed when she discovered that they were true. But she had started now and she went on. "Would you send a man to hang because he tried to help people like us? Some day Randal might decide that he wants our place too. And when he—"

Parker stared at his daughter. He didn't pretend to know much about women, but he guessed that even quiet women like Laura had to have their say sometimes and there wasn't much a man could do about it.

Suddenly the life went out of Laura's voice. The tautness left her face, and her shoulders seemed to slump just a little.

"The sorry, Father, I don't know what made me talk like that. I—I guess I'm just used."

She was the daughter now that Noah Parker knew, the daughter he knew how to talk to. He led the black horse inside the barn and got the poncho off the back of the saddle. "It's all right," he said. "Here, put this poncho over your head and go back to the dugout. I'll take care of things now."

Noah Parker watched her as she went back into the rain. Then he put the horse away and went back to the outlaw.

It would be easy now. All he had to do was get a gun, squeeze the trigger and it would be over. Nobody would know the difference, nobody would care—except Laura, maybe. But it wouldn't be hard to explain it to her. The outlaw came in and tried to kill him. That's all there was to it. Then he would be

free again. Nobody would know who he was or where he came from. Nobody would care. Now was the time to do it while it would be easy.

But sometimes a job can be too easy. If the outlaw could fight back, that would make it different. Not he just lay there, hardly breathing. Noah Parker knew then that he couldn't kill him. Not now.

BUT a night in bed can do a lot of things to a man's planning. A night of remembering something that Laura had said. "Would you send a man to hang because he tried to help people like us?"

Maybe Cameron was all right. Maybe the outlaw didn't even remember him. Maybe, but Noah had waited too long now. He had had too chance to make sure that the Marks Lang would keep on being a safe place for him and he had passed it.

The next morning when he went back to the barn he went without his gun. That was a mistake.

The outlaw was still there. His face was still white, his eyes were closed and he breathed deeply and regularly as if he were asleep.

He was not asleep. The eyes came open and that amazingly soft voice said, "Stay where you are, mister." The blankets moved, a little feebly, but enough to get a hand out and fix a .45 on Noah's middle. After he had done that he took a deep breath as if he was holding the weight of the world in that one hand. "All right, mister, you can talk. Who are you?"

Noah stopped short and stared. That was all he could manage to do while looking into the muzzle

It's a modern medical miracle . . .

THEY say a cat has nine lives, but Mrs. Colla McKensie has gone one better—she has died nine times and is now living her tenth life. It is nothing to do with reincarnation; it is due to the amazing development of medical science. Because of an instrument developed by Dr. Paul M. Zoll, of Boston's Beth Israel Hospital, Mrs. McKensie has nine times had her heart put back into working order after it stopped beating. There isn't here so easy to parallel Mrs. McKensie's, although another woman has been revived eight times and more than 20 persons around Boston have been brought back to life by Dr. Zoll's method within the last two years. In most of these cases the patients died more than once. The instrument responsible is called the "Pacemaker" because it electrically

stimulates the heart until it resumes its natural pace. It is comparatively small, being about the size of a portable radio set. Two small clamps are slipped on the wrists and two electrodes are placed on the chest over the heart. When the monitoring device detects the cessation of the heart beat, it automatically starts the "Pacemaker," whose electrical impulses start the heart muscle functioning again. The "Pacemaker" cannot substitute or repair fatal injury, but it does give faltering hearts and the hearts of persons on the operating table another chance. All major hospitals in Boston now employ the "Pacemaker" and about a hundred are in use throughout United States—from Boston to Los Angeles and north to Miami.



of that Ah. Quickly, he tried to remember if Cameron had had that gun the day before. He didn't remember seeing it. It had probably been stuck in his waistband under his shirt. Anxiously, Noah looked to see if the gunman recognized him. He could tell. Could it be that Cameron didn't remember him?

Cameron's eyes squinted for seconds and he looked puzzled. Then the faintest smile in the world touched his mouth, and Noah knew the man had placed him.

"Noah Parker," the soft voice said. The smile widened just a little and then vanished. "People in Arkansas have been wondering about you. But I guess I'm not one to talk, am I?"

Noah didn't say anything. He cursed himself for not taking care of this man the way he had planned, but it was too late to do anything about it now.

The soft voice spoke again. "So you're a farmer now?" He dropped the gun heavily to his side but he kept it in his hand. "That's funny, in a way. I was a farmer too, me and my pop. We left Arkansas directly after you got mixed up in that killing."

Noah didn't try to explain that he hadn't killed anybody. It would not be any use.

"But, like I say," Cameron went on, "I guess I'm not one to talk. I'm an outlaw. The Government's got a bounty on my head, the same as on you. So I've got a proposition to make. You take care of me until I'm ready to ride again and I can forget that I ever saw you."

"And if I don't?"

The smile touched Cameron's mouth again. "I'm a good shot. But that's not the reason you'll take care of me." The smile vanished. "I said I was a farmer. Me and my pop had some bottom land over west of 'White Rock.' He passed and his mouth got tight. He looked steady at Noah. "We had some. Do you know the story?"

Noah shook his head. "I don't guess I do."

"Maybe you'll want to know what kind of man you're up against. Like I said, me and my pop had this little piece of bottom land, up till the cottonmen decided they wanted it for the water there and tried to run us out. My pop wouldn't run. He got killed. I wouldn't run either at first, but then I killed a marshal

and I had to. So now I'm an outlaw because I tried to protect my property."

He thought about that for a while and his eyes took on a colourless, inward-looking appearance. "An outlaw," he said softly. "A killer. Yeah, I've killed some men. You're wondering how I got this hole in my leg. I got it by killing a man over at White Rock, one of the Randal's gunmen who was trying to push some friends of mine off their land. He pulled first and got me in the leg. But a jury wouldn't believe that. A posse sought to be sorry over this part of the country right now."

Sometimes a man does crazy things. Noah wasn't sure just what it was that made up his mind. It could have been the gun, that big .45 that lay beside the outlaw. But he didn't think that was it. It could have been that white face, or the feeling that some day Randal would try to move in on his own land. More likely it was just that sometimes you take a liking to a man. Noah knew how a folk to be burned. And he knew now that they would never find out where he was, not from Tall Cameron.

"We'll move you up to the left," he said. "The posse won't find you there."

TALL CAMERON had been right about the posse. About noon six of them came riding across the field that the outlaw had come through the day before. When they got closer Noah could see that Spade Randal and the new marshal were heading the group. They rode up to the front of the dug-out where Noah

and Laura were waiting. The two leaders swung down from their horses.

The new marshal was a big man. He had the thick, heavy features of a man who didn't rely on his thinking to get things done. Little red spots poked his face. That and a big porous nose and he was a heavy drinker. Randal was different. He was the most kind. He wore a frock coat and a clean shirt and a black riding tie like a gambler, or maybe a lawyer. His face had the lean, sharp look of both.

The marshal wheeled and spot on the ground. He wiped a dirty hand across his mouth and said, "You seen any strangers around here, especially one riding a big black? He's probably got a hole in him somewhere."

The horse . . . Noah had forgotten about him, but it was too late to do anything about it now. He tried to look thoughtful for a minute. "No," he said, "don't recall seeing anybody like that. Don't see many people around here, though. What's he done?"

Spade Randal took a little step in front, just enough to let the marshal know he was talking over. "He killed one of our deputies yesterday. We trailed him as far as the creek down to the west of your place, but the rain came up then and we lost him. The Government has a thousand dollars on his head for killing a United States deputy over in White Rock. If you nab him the money's yours."

"That's a lot of money," Noah said. "I'll keep a sharp eye open, gentlemen, you can bet on that."



"There'll never be another clerk like you, Finster . . . I'll see to that."



"No-hum! I think I'll go up to my room 604 and get a little slazey."

Randal's mouth turned up in a slight smile and he looked at Laura. "We got word that some of the farmers might be hiding him," Randall said. "But I know you folks wouldn't try anything like that. He probably tried to make it down the creek a way. He won't get far, not with that bite in him."

Randal and the married turned back to their horses and resumed. For a few seconds Randall looked down at Noah as he said, "This is a nice piece of land you've got here, Mr. Parker, but it seems to me that it would be better for cattle than for farming. Have you thought of selling?"

Noah sat himself tighter, but he managed to keep his face straight. "I never thought of it," he said. "No, I don't think I'd be interested in selling."

Randal smiled. "Well, good-bye Mr. Parker . . . and you, Miss Parker." The other man pulled their horses around, but Randall waited. "I may be seeing you folks again before long. If you change your mind about selling, let me know." He poked on the reins and was gone with the rest of the posse.

Noah and Laura watched them cross the ploughed field and head west towards the creek.

"We'll be next," Laura said quietly. "He's taken a fancy to our land and it won't be long until he

tries to push us off."

Noah looked at her. He thought of some things to say, but somehow it didn't seem to be worth while saying them. He watched the posse until they reached a line of willows down at the far edge of the field and disappeared. Finally he said, "I'll get the horse and hide him in case they come back."

THE POSSE didn't come back. For the next few days nothing much happened. There had been no more word from Randall, and Noah had decided that he had got jittery over nothing. And Tall Cameron was better. He could stand on that leg of his; he could even walk a little with the help of a cane.

But there was something else, something that Noah Parker didn't understand or like. He didn't pretend to understand women, but his daughter wasn't like other women—not to Noah.

Lately there was something different about her, and Noah didn't know what it was. When she spoke to Cameron her voice had one thing and her eyes another. These were the things that worried Parker. Slowly he began to understand.

You don't have to know much about women to know when one is in love. He couldn't blame Laura. It wasn't much fun for her to be stuck on a farm like this with never a chance of going anywhere. He

couldn't blame anybody.

Not even Tall Cameron. He hadn't done anything or said anything. Yet, like Laura, he didn't have to. It's easy to tell how a man feels about a woman, even when he doesn't do anything about it.

Cameron knew it wasn't any good. He would be tramped down and some day they would get him. Maybe that was the reason he said, "Thank you, Miss Parker," when Laura brought his meals to him. Or, "I'm much obliged to you, Miss Parker," when she changed his bandage. His voice said that, but that didn't change the things his eyes were saying.

There was nothing Noah could do. There are some men that you like without reason at all. They don't have to be good, they don't even have to think the way you do—you just like them. That's the way it had got to be with Tall Cameron. He just happened to like the man.

By the time Tall was able to walk it was too late to do anything about it. Maybe things would have worked out some way on their own, but you can't live away from people completely. There is always somebody to ask questions. Somebody to demand something. Like the morning two men came riding from the east.

Noah had started for the barn, but when he saw the riders he turned back to the dog-cart.

"Tall-Laura—it looks like we're going to have company. Tall, you better stay inside. Me and Laura can take care of it."

Laura hurried up the steps and stood alongside her father as the riders got closer. Tall pushed the dug-out door open and stood at the bottom of the steps looking over the ridge of dug earth. He looked for a long time without making a sound; then he stepped back into the dug-out. When he came outside again he had his gun stuck inside his waistband.

"Tall!" Noah yelled. "Get back inside, and put that gun away. Laura and I will take care of this."

Tall didn't move. He didn't even seem to hear.

"Tall!" Laura said urgently. "Please!"

He looked up at Laura. He took his gun out and bounced it in his hand for a minute and seemed to think hard. "They're Randall's men," he said slowly. "He's taken a liking to your land and here's where he starts to push you off."

"He's not going to push anybody off!" Noah snapped. "And there's no going to be any killing. Now, get back inside so they don't see you."

Tall looked quickly at the two riders. He bounced his gun once more and then pushed it back in his waistband. Then, he silently went inside.

THE TWO men rode down the slope and as they got closer Noah made out their features. One was a thick, heavy man with most of his face covered with grey beard. He had a big nose that had been flattened some time or other, probably with a barrel of a .43. He kept his heavy lips open constantly and did his breathing through his mouth. The other man wasn't any particular shape or size. A dead cigarette dangled from the corner of his mouth, and his eyes looked sleepy; made from that, they had no more expression than two holes in the mud.

They rode up in front of the dug-out, and the heavy one clucked down from his horse. The one with the cigarette sat and stared at nothing—or perhaps everything.

"Toy Parker?" the heavy man said. His voice had a high nasal twang due to his flattened nose. He hitched his gun-belt and let his right hand hang limp by the butt of his .43. That might be for effect. It might not.

"My name's Parker," Noah said. "Why?"

The heavy head nodded. "This is your land here. It's for sale. The party I work for has decided to buy it."

"You must have the wrong place, mister," Noah said. "This land is not for sale."

The thick mouth grinned. "Maybe

you didn't know it, but it is. We're buying it for a hundred dollars and giving you a week to get off. When we decide to buy something we buy it."

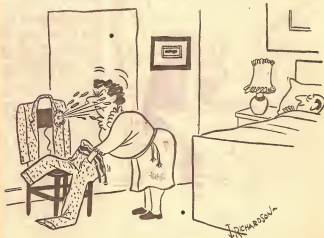
The grinner laughed. It wasn't a pretty laugh. It stopped abruptly. "We'll give you a day to think it over and get the papers ready," he said shortly. "Our party is what you might call a man of action."

Laura caught her breath and for a minute that was the only sound. Noah shook his head and tried to get words out, but they stuck in his throat. A hundred dollars. . . . That wouldn't even pay for the barn. He wanted to yell, or curse, or fight. He couldn't do anything.

The heavy grinner laughed again. "Remember, Parker, tomorrow. We won't make our offer again." He turned to get on his horse. He took one step, and that was all.

A gun roared. Flame leaped up from the steps of the dug-out. The man, jerked. Cameron appeared on the bottom step of the dug-out and his gun roared again. The thick grinner jerked once more and grabbed at his rearing horse. He didn't make it. He doubled, half turned on one leg, and then fell down on the ground. He was dead before he hit the earth.

The other man pulled hard on his horse and wheeled. Cameron stopped out and fired again, but this time he was too late. The other rider



had pulled his horse quickly around the dug-out and had the animal stretched, running hard in the direction of town.

Tell Cameron cursed. He dropped over to the dead gunman, turned him over with the toe of his boot, and spit on the ground.

"You!" Laura was the first to speak. Her voice was tight, almost hysterical and ready to break.

"He didn't have a chance. . . ." The voice was quiet and full of wonder. It took Noah a while to recognize it as his own. "Two times, right in the back."

Tell Cameron raised his hand and looked at both of them. He punched the empties out of his gun and reloaded. "He would have done the same to me," he said slowly. "That's one thing you have to learn when they make you an outlaw—never give them a chance. You can't afford to give them one damn chance."

He slipped his gun back inside his belt and glared down at the dead man. "I've been looking for him for a long time." His voice was soft again. Dourly and soft. "He's the one that killed my pop. Right in the back, two times. He never gave anybody a chance, either."

Laura tried to say something, but all that came out was a sob. She started at Cameron as if she was seeing him for the first time. Her mouth worked, but no sound came out. Suddenly she turned, there was a quick little running sound and the slam of the dug-out door. Silence. Then the sounds of sobbing, dry, rasping sobs that do no good to anybody.

Cameron stared at the dug-out. He ran a hand nervously over his face and then wiped the back of his neck with a handkerchief. For the first time there seemed to be doubts inside him.

He turned quickly to Noah. "You understand, don't you? He would have done the same thing to me. He wouldn't have given me a chance."

Noah shook his head. "It's not for me to say what's right or what's wrong. Anyway, we haven't got time to talk about it. Do you think you can ride?"

"You'll have to. You're going to have to get away from here as fast as you can and ride as far as you can before the posse gets here. I've got your horse staked on the creek. I'll have to get him. You wait in the dug-out and get your stuff together and I'll be back as quick

as I can."

Cameron didn't seem to be sure about anything now. But he needed, "All right, whatever you say." He looked at the dug-out. He didn't want to go to there where Laura was, but there didn't seem to be anything else to do.

NOAH found the horse. The saddle and blanket were still pushed under a hollow log where he had hidden them. Noah got there, threw them up on the black, and made them tight. Finally he was ready. All he had to do now was get the horse back to the dug-out and put Cameron on him.

Noah took a look over the top of the creek bank to see that everything was all right.

He was too late. The gunman that had never had ridden fast, off to the west, in the direction of town, he saw them. There must be a dozen of them, anyway, and they were pushing their horses hard.

For an instant Noah watched. They were hardly more than specks now, but the specks were growing. There wasn't time to get away. The only thing he could do was to try to beat the posse to the dug-out and try to bluff them.

He made it as fast as he could. He didn't dare run; that would make the riders suspicious, and that was one thing he didn't want now. But it was working out all right. . . . so fast. If he was in luck he could beat them by a couple of minutes.

He made the dug-out just as the posse hit the ploughed field. When he burst inside, Laura was sitting at the kitchen table, her arms crossed on the table and her face pushed in them. Every once in a while a little sound would tear itself out of her. It wasn't a sob, or a cry, just a little sound that didn't mean much at anything.

Tell Cameron stood beside her. He stood there motionless, staring, but not at anything in the room. His eyes were wide, but they were looking inwardly and only Tell Cameron could tell what he was seeing.

"I couldn't get the horse up here," Noah pointed. "That rider that got away must have worked in a hurry, because a posse is already on the way. There're dozens across the field now—and damn fast!"

Something like his rammed into Cameron's eyes. He stepped to the high window and looked out. He turned quickly from the window and looked at Noah and Laura. His mouth tightened and his voice was hard.

"There's no time to get away now. Noah, when they get here you go out and tell them that I had a gun on you this morning when the two gunmen were here. Tell them that you had been afraid to say anything. I killed one of them off, got my horse out of the barn, and made off to the north. Have you got that straight?"

Noah nodded. "I've got it." Cameron thought hard. "Maybe . . . Yeah, I think it would be better if Laura did it instead of you."



"Don't tell me that's somebody else who knows you and your wife."

(Continued on page 22)



"He's not exactly handsome, Peg, but he was poured water for bookmarks."

Deadly Downbeat

Mitch was a hot musician, with an ear for a good arrangement, an eye for a pretty girl, a nose that smelled murder three octaves off!

ALBERT SIMMONS • FICTION

YEARS ago, the politicians had promised that the Avenue of the Americas would soon be another Champs Elysees but today, with its cobblestones removed, its smooth black asphalt face looked forebarn. Without the clattering, noisy roar of the elevated trains it was just another New York street. Particularly around West 43rd, it was just another street.

Reflexively, I rubbed my right hand against my coat. It hurt. Where the three fingers were missing, it hurt. They always hurt and I couldn't get used to it. I didn't wait for the light to change but tucked the brown leather brief case under my arm and ducked across the street, moving through the streaming traffic. Just I liked to do because it made me feel twentyish, and when you're in your thirties it's good to feel twentyish again.

As I ran across the street, the brief case became a football and I dreamed I was breaking out into the open with nothing between me and the goal posts but one fullback. A yellow cab honked furiously at my spinning feet and a red-headed taxi-driver looked disappointed at having missed me. It was fun.

Just as I touched the curb on the other side, I collided heavily with something on the corner. This was no fullback. This was a cute Kelly green suit stuffed with something soft and feminine.

We both said Oh but with different inflections and I dropped the briefcase to the pavement. Instinctively I stuck out my hands to steady her and her shoulders felt like they were at home in my palms.

"I'm sorry," I mumbled, "I thought you were a fullback."

She looked at me, and though her firm chin still flared in annoyance, her sparkling green eyes were amused, smiling.

"Mr. a fullback? Say, I bet you tell that to all the girls!"

She stepped away and tapped briefly at a white linen blouse, and then her busy hands smoothed her suit over her trim hips.

"I'm sorry," I said again, "On closer observation I can see you're much too cute to be a football player."

She looked pleased as she brushed stray wisps of copper-colored hair out of her dancing eyes. The soft musical sound I heard ringing in my ears was only her tinkling laughter.

"It's all right," she smiled, "there's nothing broken."

I looked her over appreciatively and thought it would be a pity if there were. I picked up the briefcase with one hand and her arm with the other.

"Which way are you going?" I asked hopefully.

"Your way," was her positive answer, and when she noticed the expression that crossed my face she added with a sly grin, "I'm a singer, Mr. Irving. I was just coming to see you, anyway."

"Oh," I grinned. A red-headed thrush was all I needed.

"Please?"

"Okay," I nodded, "come on."



The little two-by-four I used as a stool was on the top floor of a three-story shack that should have been condemned twenty years ago. It had a piano and a desk; all the space I needed to make up the dance arrangements I do for Steve Hunko's ten-piece orchestra.

I dropped the briefcase on the piano. "Look," I said, "why come to me? Steve's the boy for you to see. It's his band; he hires the help; besides, I can't do you any good."

She came over and put her hand on my arm, standing very close to me.

"You're Steve's friend," she murmured. "Everybody knows that Mitch Irwin is Steve Hunko's best friend. Besides, he won't see me—for me—but he will for you."

Her fingers were doing things to my arm and I noticed then that her lipstick was on too thick and her blouse too tight. I shoved her away.

"Look kid, you don't have to do that," I ignored the red that came up in her cheeks. "I'm just Steve's errand; go get your audition from him."

"All right," she muttered. "So I made a mistake! Mitch Irwin's a nice guy—but how many see there?"

That embarrassed me plenty. "For Pete's sake," I yelled, wanting to get rid of her. "Don't be a little sap. Go on back to Millville or Tanktown or wherever

it is you come from."

"No," she said stubbornly. "I'm staying." She turned and walked away, the pink tinge of her neck cooling me.

"What a nuisance," I said. She turned slowly and I could see that there was something glowering in her eyes. "Get down to the Club Century tonight," I told her. "Make it tonight, kid. . . ."

"Call me Leg," she murmured. "Lee Fuller."

"Nice name," I said. "Well, you come over. We're leaving on our tomorrow, so make it tonight, kid! I might be able to do it for you with Steve so's he'll listen to you. And, Leg, just sing, not me! Steve's a right guy, what I mean is—a real right guy."

She came over then and her warm lips brushed mine lightly with the soft kiss of a child.

"Thanks, Mitch," she said. "Thanks a lot."

After she was gone, I sat down at the piano and let my left hand roll over the keyboard the way my right hand longed to do—but couldn't. Those missing fingers were aching again, and to forget them, I kept thinking about the red-head and wondering why the hell I had sent her to see Steve. Even if she were great, she didn't have a chance. We had a girl vocalist already. After all, how many doll-faced singers can a band use?



But Steve would understand; my pal Steve always understood. Like the time I lost those fingers and my career at the same time. But there I was still with him. I knew he wouldn't let me down. "From now on you're my arranger, Mitch," he'd told me, and he'd meant it. Steve was like that, a great guy with his friends.

I missed manuscripts until dark. Then I went down to the corner drugstore, and polished off a liver-wurst on rye, and a large coke. After a while, I started off for work.

The Club Century on West 4th Street in the Village was no first-class club any more, then Steve's coquette was a top-ditch one, but it did the business and we got paid so we didn't worry about its appearance. You had to go down eight steps to get into the place, which is two lower than some of our best bistros, but what a difference two steps can make.

The gilded tables, silver chairs, and heavy, beaded draperies looked as worn and tired as some of the early customers sitting around the dark room. Two bartenders were polishing glass like they were on relief but I knew that come another hour, they'd wish they had three heads apiece.

Peth, our blonde singer, came out of the Powder Room and called to

me in a thin, tight voice. She looked highly agitated and nervous. I waited for her and she hurried over, slipping her hand through my arm and we walked toward the dressing room in the rear of the empty backstage.

"What's wrong, Peth?" I asked. She didn't speak at first but just hung there next to me. Like I said, Peth was blonde-honey blonde—and cute, but as far as I was concerned, she couldn't sing for your apples.

"I'm scared, Mitch," she muttered through set teeth and I felt her trembling.

"What's the matter?" I snapped. "What's got into you?"

Those big blue eyes of hers that were usually so provocative were dull and filmy with terror and it wasn't for the heavy rings on her cheeks, she'd have looked as though she'd seen a ghost.

"It's gone, Mitch . . . Skins has disappeared!"

WHAT did she want from me? Sympathy? Skins the war drummer and a damned good one. I might add, though he wasn't the kind of guy men like. There was no exception. But women, now that was something different.

Skins was built like a movie star and had looks to match. He was the

type that the entire female population squealed at in sheer delight, with dark wavy hair and broad shoulders.

I glanced at Peth's white face. She was only one in Skins' Hit Parade of women, but she must have gone whole hog for the guy.

I pried her hand away and held on to her fingers in self-defense. "Take it easy, Peth," I jerked my thumb to the rear. "It's probably back there now."

"Not Me!" she shouted out tensely. "It's dead, Skins. I'm sure he's dead!" she cried. "Just like the other one, he's dead!"

I felt the shock go through me and it hurt. "Like the other one," she'd said. The blood must have drained out of my face because my lips suddenly turned very cold. "Like the other one." Now I was cold all over; I'd almost forgotten about him. Then Peth was making too much noise and people were looking at us so I pushed her through the door on the back and into the large dressing room.

The boys in the back looked up as we came in. Skins were playing gin, others just sitting around talking.

"Just like the other one," Peth had said, and I could see by their expressions that they remembered, too. You don't forget murder!

Seven months before, when we'd gone on tour the last time, Dick Swift had been our drummer. However, the night before we'd left, he'd disappeared and we had to go on without him. It wasn't until three months later that they found him. In the river, they found him—his throat slashed from ear to ear—and they never found out why.

The big grandfather clock high on the wall of the bare room suddenly sounded like an old-fashioned time bomb. Peth jumped to her feet crying, "Where is he? Why doesn't he get home?"

Nick, the sweetly little pianist who had taken my place at the eighty-eight, went over and touched the bare skin of her white shoulder with his long hairy fingers.

"Take it easy, baby—he'll show, don't he always?"

And I kept thinking—always. Skins was always the first one at the Club . . . "Mind tonight."

Nick also his arm around Peth's waist, his mouth humming cheerily over the soft words of comfort he didn't know how to say, his ever two bright beads that glided like hard glass. The blonde pushed him away from her, her red lips twisting with disgust.

"Let me alone," she spat viciously. "Let me alone!"

"Ah, Peth, baby," he muttered. His hand reached out for her arm, but suddenly, it shot up to his own cheek instead as her long nails clawed at his face, and left a bright red mark on his cheek.

His fingers came away from the crimson scratch and when he saw the blood, he went wild.

"You're a fool," he croaked hoarsely. "Pretty Boy Rio ain't worth it. Ain't you wise yet? He's had his fill of you, baby, he's tired of you." His voice was sharp with



ALL
RIGHT

"Well, the only way you can love her and not for any of the other girls is to marry each girl up, marry your secretary and divorce your wife!"

jealous. "You know what you are now, baby," he grinned. "You're just a jee-lover!"

I sat him with my left and it felt good when he went sprawling on the floor.

Then I heard an ugly metallic clink. I turned quickly. Nick was on his feet, he was breathing hard and he had a long-bladed knife in his right fist.

"You couldn't have done that, Mitch," he snarled. "You had no right!"

A couple of the boys grabbed at him and I went over and stood. "You're right, Nick, I shouldn't have done it."

THE hand line of his mouth softened. He bent the blade with his thumb and I saw it go into his coat pocket. "Okay, Mitch," he said softly and turned away and picked up some of my more arrangements.

That was the first time I knew that Nick carried a knife. . . . I wasn't going to forget it by any means. I would wish to go all that was holy that I could forget it.

Red, the first trumpet, piped up. "A guy's forty minutes late and gives me git, Steve?"

"Steve ain't never been late before," somebody chimed in.

"An, about up, both of you," yelled the guitarist. He turned to me. "I don't like it, Mitch," he said. "It's too similar to last time. Remember an ear last toy when. . ."

Pat's snickered just once and showing her lipped-up headstuck against her mouth, ran out of the room.

The door opened and Steve Henko bounced in. "Hi, gang," he chirped. "Let's go. Mine they want, mine we'll give 'em."

There was an uneasy staring all around and Steve's head, gray eyes except the room again.

"Where's Ray?" he asked and he looked surprised. He mumbled something when I told him that Steve wasn't there. "Where the hell is he?" he snapped angrily. He glanced at his wrist watch. "We're going on in a couple of minutes."

Then he caught what was on everybody's mind and he seemed angry. "I know what you're thinking," he ripped out. "You're nuts. Steve is just late, you hear me, just late, that's all." And when the door opened unexpectedly, he yapped, "There he is!"

Only it wasn't Steve, it was some thin, pale guy I'd never seen before. He waved a slender hand at us by way of greeting.

"Hey, which one of you guys is Steve Henko?"

Steve identified himself and nodded at him. "What do you want?"

"Hi, Steve," he said shrilly. "I'm Jack Wilton. . . . your new drummer?"

I SAT there in the dressing room listening to the muffled roar of Steve Henko's orchestra. The drummer was too loud, and he read music lousy; he was murdering my arrangements. Why didn't Steve tell him?

Steve only used the guy because he had no alternative, he had to—Steve didn't show, I went over and picked up the telephone, thinking Steve would do what I was going to do anyway. I dialed my number and waited. When they answered, I said: "Get me Joe Kormanek."

Joe was our captain of the messengers' union, and a right guy who went out of his way to help. "Hello, Joe here," he had a voice like thunder in a tunnel and he knew it.

"Mitch Irwin, Joe."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, how are you doing, boy?"

"Fine." I yapped into the mouthpiece. "But how come the lousy drummer you sent us?"

"Lousy? You naps? How come you've been satisfied for seven months and all of a sudden Steve is lousy?"

"Steve! I'm not talking about Ray, it's the other guy, the thin fellow you just sent over."

"You drunk or are you snuffing the white stuff? I didn't send anybody over to you."

I got off the phone as quickly as I could and went out front. The new drummer had said he'd gotten a hot call from Joe. But how come Kormanek didn't know about it? Steve had made the guy with the sticks soft pedal a bit so it wasn't so bad for the dancers—for me, it was awful. This guy was no Steve. He sat down at a table in the corner and ordered me a small beer.

Steve needed at me messangrfully and he headed the baton to one of the boys. I waited for him to come over. When he did, he was angry. He kicked out a chair from under the table and sat down. He must have read my face because he said, "He hasn't showed!"

"Oh, uh, and I got news for you," he said nothing, but his curious eyes questioned me. "Joe didn't send that guy over, Steve."

"What?"

"I called Joe and he knows nothing about it."

He put me to the words, "Then who did?"

Questions like that I have no answers for. Absentmindedly, Steve picked up my glass and sipped slowly at my beer. "I don't like it, Mitch, if anything's happened. . . ." He broke off and looked thoughtful.

"The boys are getting jittery," I told him, "they remember. . ."

He cut me off by bringing the glass down on the table.

"Don't you think I know?" he said sharply. Then he reached over and squashed my shoulder in his fingers. "Don't mind me, Mitch, huh?"

I grinned. "You're my boy, Steve, I understand you."

"Good."

"Brenda!" I went on looking at my watchful right hand. "I don't forget what you've done for me, Steve," he mumbled a protest, but I kept talking; every once in a while I had to get my prostrate off my chest. "If it hadn't been for you, pal, I'd be out of the band business and you know what that would mean to me! I owe you. . ."

Name Four Australian...

Empire Title Holders

IF you go back a few years,

you will find quite a few Australians who fought for Empire titles. Jimmy Kahn was the Empire lightweight title in the thirties; Ben Richards beat Fred Han-

berry in a fight which was advertised as being for the Empire middleweight title.

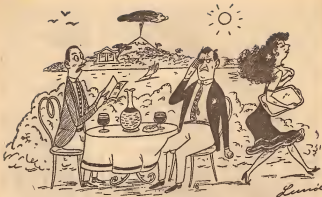
There have been others, too, some with no real claim to championships of the Empire. However, to make the question easier, can you name four Australians who held Empire titles since the end of World War II? Of course, Dave Sands was the middleweight title by knocking out the holder, Dick Turpin in a round.

That was in 1949. Jimmy Corcoran was the Empire bantam crown when he knocked out Vic Turner in a round in South Africa, in 1952. He also won the world title at the same time. Pat Ford became Empire lightweight champion when he outpointed Frank Johnson in 1953. George Barnes won the Empire welter title when he knocked out the holder, Barry Brown, in 11 rounds in 1954. There have been other Empire title title in Australia since the war.

Johnson beat Frank Hanberry for the vacant crown a few months before he lost the title to Ford. Ford knocked out Johnson in a return Empire title fight.

Ford lost his title to Noel Indian, Ivor Gormley on points, but won it back in a return. When Dave Sands was killed in a truck accident, all his five titles became vacant. Studious Ltd. matched Al Bourke and Ben Tooley in fight for the vacant Australian and Empire middleweight titles.

Bourke won. But only the Australian title was really at stake, as there were other Empire fighters who had to be considered for Empire honors. Pat Corcoran won the vacant Empire title by outpointing Bobby Sims.



"Well doesn't it say right here in the parallel that you'll be struck by the beauty of the planet?"

"Shut up, Mitch," he said softly. "You're a damned good arranger. I'm lucky to have you."

But I knew better. I'd have cut my throat for Steve and I wanted him to know it.

I looked up as Patti came over, an anxious expression on her test features. She didn't have to ask if I'd heard from Skins.

"Let me off tonight, Steve . . . I . . . I've got to find him . . . please." She sounded desperate.

"No need for that, Patti," he said gently. "Mitch is going over and get him."

I glanced quickly at Steve. "Sure, kid, sure," I chirped up. "I'm leaving now, and stop stewing with you, huh? Skins is probably drunk somewhere."

She knew I was lying because Skins didn't drink, but she moved closer and put her cold palm against my cheek. "You're sweet, Mitch, you really are." And she turned and walked quickly away.

"Which reminds me, Steve. A girl's coming over tonight, Lee Fuller's her name."

"Lee Fuller? Who's she?"

"A gal," I said simply. "She sings. Listen to her, huh, a fiver for me, huh, Steve boy, just listen."

He laughed. "Okay, pal, but I got a better idea—you listen to her!"

"Huh, uh."

"Okay, but as you say," He got up and strode across the room leaving me sitting there, the remains of our community beer in front of me.

SKINS RID lived in a small, shabby apartment house on the upper west side. At that time of night the street was quiet and dark, the occasional lighted paces of glass the only sign of life behind the windows. I stopped in front of No. 44. It was the last house on the street; it looked old and dirty. Small bits of torn paper, cigarette butts and other litter formed an unwelcome carpet for me to walk on as I slipped into the vestibule. If he wasn't there, I had no idea where I'd look next unless it was the Mining Bureau's Bureau. The globe was so dingy in the hall that I had to light a match to read the banked panel of names over the worn door buttons.

I found the right button, pushed it and waited. Pretty soon there was the click-click as a curtain was drawn in Skins' apartment and the door moved inward under the pressure of my hand. There was a small, self-operating automatic elevator and I was glad; I didn't relish climbing six flights of stairs just to say hello to a drummer boy.

The sixth floor corridor was just as dark as the one downstairs, but Skins had his door partly open and I walked toward the sharp dart of bright light they pushed out into the dismal blackness of the hallway.

I shoved the door open all the way and went inside but Skins wasn't there.

"Hey, Skins?" I called. "Skins, where are you?"

The only answer was a stifling

kind of silence that I felt all around me like a heavy curtain of soaking wet blankets . . . that, and a faint tapping noise that reached my ears in a steady, familiar rhythm that I couldn't quite place. I called the drummer's name a couple of times more but all I could hear was my own voice . . . and that disgusting tap-tap-tapping. Suddenly I knew what it was somewhere water was slowly dripping out of a leaky tap. I followed the sound of it into a small bedroom off the living room and found the leak . . . only it wasn't water!

Skins had been sitting propped up at a small wooden table, his face a ghastly shade of white under the harsh light of a hundred watt bulb. His eyes, coldly fixed, were staring at me as if he couldn't believe what he saw. But Skins saw nothing . . .

There was a knife wound in his throat.

It was only because I bent forward for a closer look at the trace of white powder I could see on Skins' lapel that they didn't find me lying next to the dead drummer.

It was just that close. You see, I know face powder when I see it, so I stopped to make sure still something was a quiet song of violent death about six inches above my head. I heard it hit the door-jamb with a terrifying thud as the heavy blade bit into the soft wood. I saw the wicked horse tail of a long knife dancing with disappointment at having missed me and somewhere a door slammed with a loud noise. It was in the next room.



no—wait!”

“Wait! For what?”

He was desperate, groping blindly in a dark one-way street. “There must be some way—there has to be. I . . . I’ve got to leave tomorrow on tour, I’ve waited too long to lose this chance.”

“You’re crazy!” I yelled. “What you’re asking is impossible. I must tell the cops. Don’t you see, Steve? The guy was murdered—brutally. Maybe, if you’d seen . . .”

“If we just had time. Maybe if they didn’t find out until after we left . . .”

“That would be worse, Steve. They’d only make us turn around and come back.”

He looked defeated. “You’re right, Mitch. I don’t know what I was thinking of.”

I let my hand come to rest on his arm. “We don’t leave until noon,” I said. “Maybe the cops can clear up the whole thing . . .”

“Sure, sure,” he mumbled, and stood up. “Forget it, Mitch, forget it, huh?”

I watched the spindled droop to the splendid width of his shoulders and the poise I felt for my blind was a live thing that writhed within me, if I could only help him!

The same first-footed wander with the end face came over and nudged me. “There’s a dame at the bar, Mitch; she wants to buy you a drink.”

LEE FULLER! I snapped my fingers in the air. I’d forgotten about the red-haired thrush. I looked over at the bar—but it wasn’t Lee. This one was as blonde as a possible could make her.

“Tell her I’m not thirsty,” I got up and walked toward the door leaving the waiter mummifying to himself. “What a waste—cripes, what a waste!”

The blonde babe got off the stool and crossed diagonally toward the exit so as to intercept me on my way out. She caught up with me as I went through the doorway and her arm crooked through mine.

“Come it, baby, I can’t do you any good.”

She paid no attention and nudged up to me as if she enjoyed it as we went down the steps.

“Look, blonde,” I said gruffly. “I got to see, sometime, so be a doll and fade, huh?”

She flashed a grin at me, and her lips had an even more darkly-painted look under the orange neon light that blinded over the Club Century.

“Someone wants to see you, too, honey,” she mouthed and she surveyed the empty street in front of us as if she were on hour life for a date she wanted to keep.

“Who wants to see me, blonde, huh?”

She didn’t answer at first but laughed nervously and when she did speak I had the vivid impression that she was repeating lines rehearsed in a very bad play.

“The drummer boy wants to see you, honey,” she whispered. “A drummer boy named Skins Hat!”

Did you ever swallow a big chunk of ice that got stuck in the middle of your throat? I didn’t know what

“Don’t ever let me catch you driving like that!”



"Don't forget, if we should ever have a fire, the Scotch is in this one."

to do. I felt myself grab her shoulder, my fingers dig deep into her soft flesh.

"What do you mean?" I shook her viciously. "What the hell do you mean?"

She squirmed under my grasp, her hands prying at my fingers, her face like a mask of terror.

"Let me go," she squeaked. "Let me go!"

"Yeah," croaked a hoarse voice from behind me, "let her go!"

I did and spun around to look into the face of a bull-like man whose fat, unknown features went along perfectly with the gruff low-pitched voice. He wasn't alone, either. A meowy individual, with hard eyes, black moustache and long side-burns to match, stood off to the side, one hand thrust deep in his coat pocket.

"Real it, too," said the big one, "beat it!"

She muttered something in a thin, muffled voice and walked away, her high-heeled shoes making staccato sounds on the concrete pavement.

"Okay, buddy, you're next."

I WENT in the direction the big guy nodded until they crowded me into an alley that was full of debris and darkness.

The bull-voiced one slammed me against a brick wall and pinned me there with a pair of hands that looked more like slab.

"Okay, guy, spill it!"

"Well what?" I asked. "What's all this about?"

Someone laughed—a high-pitched sound—and I knew it was the meowy boy. "He's cute, isn't he?" he whispered. "Let me..."

"Hold it!" the big fellow said. Then he came back to me. "What we're asking, fellow, is what you were doing up at his place!"

I saw the guy with the side-burns take his hand away from his pocket. It wasn't a gun after all, and I was glad. Even though the one dim ray of light in that dark alley flashed and sparkled on the long, shiny blade he held in his hand, I was glad... it wasn't a gun after all. I should have been scared, though, scared to death, because I could distinctly see that knife he held in his hand had a heavy haft... and it was made of bone!

This was the guy to Rio's apartment who had pressed the buzzer... this was the guy who had...

That time I didn't give him a chance to throw it. I ducked away from the big guy and lashed out with a left fist as hard as I could. The shock went up my arm like electricity and the trunk with the knife dropped at his back; his blade made sweet music as it hit the ground.

Something caught me behind the ear and flung me against the wall. I could have used those three missing fingers on my right hand then; after all what can a guy with only his left do against a big ape with

two fists as big as Virginia ham? "What's the set-up?" I heard him say. "Come on, spill it, where do you fit in?"

There was a long, high-pitched whining sound and then they were running, both of them running. I got up and staggered toward the street, toward the high-pitched, whining sound. A girl was standing there, a horrified look on her white face—she'd been screaming. She almost screamed again when she saw my battered features, but instead, she put her arms around me and slowly, red-headed Lee Fuller walked me toward the Club Century.

The Club Century at three a.m. was really a dead thing, still and quiet as a ghost in the dark. The sounds of music, talking, glasses and women's laughter long since gone, there remained only the hollow echo of a sport and finding night mysteriously waiting the re-verification of another day.

Now, there were lights everywhere—the boys in the orchestra were speckled out in chairs, and Morrison from Homicide and two assistants were all over the place asking questions, never-ending questions.

I'd sent Lee home just before I'd called the police and I promised to phone her soon.

The detective closed his notebook with a loud snap. "Okay, boys, you can go now." He smiled apologetically at Pettit and added, "You, too, Miss—I'm through."

"Barry, Herbie. This is a homicide case, either you'll have to get a delay on your bookings, or..." he smiled abstractly, "we'll have to clear this thing up before noon-time, huh?" And he smiled again to soften his determined snarl.

Morrison put his hot hand on my shoulder and I didn't like the

There are more ways ...

THE expression, "There are more ways of killing a cat", does not always apply to the fishes, which seems to take the brunt of many things, including the "nine lives" tale and various jokes. This has nothing to do with cats, either, but still we fish with rod, reel, line, net or spear; sometimes dynamite is used, but that is illegal. However, one of the various methods used by the Chinese is simple. They go out in rowboats at night, on each rowboat is a jet, propped up on one side, while on the other side is a white board upon which this lower gleaming in the moonlight, the fish, for some inexplicable reason, cannot resist the temptation to leap over it. As a result, they are shocked by the net and drop into the boat!

sed of it. "You come with me, Moe, I want you up there, and you," he thumbed at Nick, "you go on downtown with Jeffery." He spoke to one of his men, "Hold him until I get back, see?"

Nick's face was carved in granite, his hard eyes staring at the detective. "What do you want with me? I didn't kill the loose."

One of the detectives took Nick's knife out, balancing it in his hand. "You haven't answered hell enough questions, yet, fellow. Come, left it."

Patt burst out laughing with the high shaking sound of hysteria.

"You'll pay for it," she screamed. "You'll pay for killing him! You'll pay, you'll pay. . . . Her voice trailed off in a sob, and I turned and walked out into the darkened, deserted street, Morrison close by me.

They'd already removed the body by the time we got there and I was glad, I don't think I could have looked at it again. The apartment was in a habitation of poverty, there were men with police equipment everywhere.

"Okay," said the Lieutenant. "Now, where's the knife? Where were you standing?"

I moved forward. "Here, and the knife is. . . . I was pointing right at where it should have been but it wasn't there. . . . It was good." "Look you," growled the Lieutenant. "If you. . . ."

"He's right, Lieutenant," said a voice. "There was a knife here. Look!"

The detective went over and I heard him say, "Yeah, I see." He turned back to me. "It had a bone handle, huh?" I nodded. "The same as the one in the alley, huh?"

"Yes," I said. I was beginning to feel weary and I wished he'd get through with his questions.

"Okay, Moe, that's it." He turned his back on me and walked away.

SOMEBODY came in calling for the Lieutenant. "Hey Lieutenant, I've got something here for you. Rio was a hophole, a sniffer."

I couldn't find a word as I settled for a four-block walk to the nearest subway station. My legs were tired, but the little wheels upstairs kept going around and around. Somewhere there was a brass ring, only I couldn't seem to grab it, I kept thinking about Joe's powder, a woman's face powder, the kind I'd seen on Sid's legal, and I wondered if the police had noticed it, too. There was something screwy about that, Skine Rio was a one-woman man, one of a time, that is, so how could? Was it Patt's powder on him, and if it was. . . .

Patt opened the door to her small apartment as if she wasn't surprised to see me.

"Oh M, Mitchie, come in."

She closed the door behind me and stood there watching me as she was a sheet in the wind. "I've been drinking, Mitchie," she announced as if I didn't know. "Minimum, I have."

Her speech was thick, and the power she wore was thin. She dropped down in a big fluffy grey chair.

"I'm drunk. . . why shouldn't I be?"

"Why?" was all I said.

"Well, I'd tell you, Mitchie, you're a sweet guy." She climbed unsteadily to her feet and I helped her. Her head found the hollow of my shoulder and for a moment she seemed content to leave it there. "He's gone, Mitch," she mumbled against me. "He's gone."

I held her at arm's-length, the white face powder on the lapel of my coat glowing me on. "When did you see him last, Pattie? Do you ever get? When did you see Skine last?"

She moved away from me, muttering dully, "Last! See him last!" The window was open behind her, a slight breeze ruffling the curtains between the fire escape and the sill. Pattie walked toward it.

I suppose the middle finger was here, first as he came in off the landing, because it was her terroristian gap that announced his

arrival. Nick's swarthy face was as dark as thunder, his eyes jagged lightning, but it was the 36 calibre automatic in his fist that gave me the shivers.

"I thought knaves were more in your line, Nick," I said.

He laughed and it was an unpleasant sound. "Stay out of this, Mitch, it ain't any of yours. This is me and Patt, just the two of us."

She screamed something at him and he went over and hit her with the barrel of the gun. She moaned just once and fell down. I ran over and tried to help her up and that's when the roof caved in. . . . three times, I think. Nick brought that gun down hard on my thick skull.

WHEN I came to, things were hammering in my head and it took a little while for me to realize that it was really someone pounding furiously on the door. I got up off the floor and opened up. It was one of Morrison's fat detectives and that's when I remembered Patt.

She was lying sprawled across the grey chair, her pretty face cut and torn, a horrible mass of cruel bruises. She was breathing, but who knew for how long? It was a bad feeling.

I started toward her but the Headcase man got some wrong ideas and grabbing me by the arm spun me clear across the room. His lips were drawn, and his eyes spit angry fire. Then he cursed at me, his fists ready for action.

I don't know what would have happened if I hadn't yelled Nick's name. When the sound of it went in, it was like magic. He turned quickly and went over and picked up the telephone.

"Nick's crazy," I muttered bitterly. "He must be to do a thing like this." Then I remembered that he was supposed to be down at Headquarters and I didn't understand.

"He got away from Jeffers on the way down," the detective told me. "As soon as the Lieutenant found out, he sent me over here. I guess he figured something like this."

After they took Patt to the hospital, I grabbed me a crumpled hat and went home. If ever a guy needed sleep I did, and I could hardly wait but what I didn't know was that the cops weren't falling my way. My key went into the lock and his gun into my back at the same time.

"Open up and get inside," said Nick's voice. It was like a cold wind.

We went in and he closed the door behind us, then he switched on the light. "To bad I had to drag you, Mitch," he sounded almost apologetic but his gun didn't look it. "How's Patt?" he asked in an off-hand way.

I guess I lost my temper then but I couldn't help it.

"Don't, Moe, don't!" he warned grimly, and he waved his gun at me. "She had it coming," he snapped. "Besides, the way she told it, she made them think I killed Rio." I let him talk. "I could have, too," he went on.

The Air Force should know . . .

MOST of the credit for discovering radar goes to Sir Robert Watson Watt, although many others experimented with it. It was his proposal which launched, in 1935, the project which culminated in the discovery of radar. He was responsible for the programme which cost ten million pounds before the beginning of World War II and which, before the end of the war, had cost more than the Manhattan Project which produced the atom bomb. But the cost was well worth it in the saving of lives, planes and buildings. The youngest son of a joiner, Watt was born on April 13, 1892 at Brechin, Scotland. He went to the University College, Dundee and got a degree with distinction in electrical engineering. During World War I he worked on numerous scientific problems associated with radio. He went to the Surface to study the radio-characteristics of tropical thunderstorms and to the Arctic for radio observations of the hemisphere. In 1927 it was rumored that Germany had discovered radio-location (radar), but it was disproved and Watt went ahead quickly to finish his own work. England had radar at the outbreak of war and this radar had an important bearing on the outcome of the Battle of Britain.



"You're excited . . . I guess that means you like it!"

"They just wanted you for questioning," I told him. "Fanning was wrong."

Sleep, now, was a far-away thing. By the time I got out to Steve's place, Morrison was there with a couple of his men; one of them I hadn't seen before.

The Lieutenant looked surprised when he saw me and my comment that I couldn't sleep seemed to have no effect on him whatsoever. Then I saw Steve. His face was pale and drawn but there were fewer points of excitement in his gray eyes.

He smiled reassuringly at me. "Oh, okay, buddy. Everything is going to be all right, Mitch, eventually."

Morrison was firing off words like a fifty-caliber, loud and long.

"Cover all details, huh, hell, all, etc. I want that guy packed up before he goes down, understand? I want Nick Michals and when you get him, look him for murder!"

He just laughed at me. "Yeah, yeah, I know. I need dough, Mitch, lots of \$\$. I'm getting out. You got me?"

I showed him my wallet. It wasn't very much, just a twenty-dollar bill, but he took it.

I WAITED forty-five minutes after he'd gone before I made up my mind—and it was only the memory of Fatty's battered face that did it, you can believe that or not. Lieutenant Morrison was still on duty when I called and when I told him that Nick had just paid me a visit, he hepped up like a first day's recruit when an officer goes by.

"He'll probably try to get money from Michals," he snapped—which was my idea exactly and the reason I'd called him—"How long ago did he leave, Irwin?"

When I told him I'd violated all the rules and regulations of the Police Department by seeing me.

Steve came over and asked for a cigarette. My hand was shaking as I held out the pack. He said, "He got me for a hundred bucks, Mitch . . . if it hadn't been for that guy . . ."

I blunked owlishly. "I don't get it. What happened?"

"He confessed, Mitch. Nick told me he killed Steve." He slipped his arm around my shoulder, the way jokers do. I guess the poor guy couldn't help it.

They were leaving then and the Lieutenant called out, "Hey, Irwin, want a lift?"

I went with him, leaving Steve standing at the door looking like a third old man and, at the same time, happy thoughts of a New Paltz holiday were doing things to the corners of his mouth.

I rode in silence on the way across town but the little old mechanical upstart was at it again. If Morrison was just wrapping up the case around Nick, what about the two garillas. Where did they figure in? I sat up suddenly. If the Lieutenant was dropping me off, he sure was going the long way round.

"Hey, where are you going? This isn't . . ."

"Take it easy, Irwin," he said, "I want to look in at Nick's place."

I sank back against the leather seat, why didn't he say that in the first place?

I don't think that old Morrison expected to find Nick in his room, because when his skeleton key opened the door he went to with his gun in his holster. Only the detective was wrong, Nick was there . . . his body sprawled on the floor.

The detective looked at the knife lying across the dead man's open right palm, the red-stained blade pointing like an accusing finger at the roadrunner wound in his throat.

"I don't figure that," he muttered quietly to himself. "I just didn't figure on that."

He went over and took a wallet out of Nick's pocket. I saw my twenty in it before he put it back in the photo-player's pocket. Then he stood up.

"Well, at least he saved the taxpayers' bank money, huh?"

My mouth was a gaping hole of disbelief. "What?"

"Don't you know a suicide when you see one?"

WHILE Morrison had called off the doghouse from his car radio, he was grinning in a self-satisfied way that didn't become a police officer. He snarped me.

"You can leave on top as scheduled now, Irwin," he told me.

"That's what you wanted, huh?" He notified Headquarters to phone Steve and then he must have caught the look on my face because he snapped, "Case closed. Any questions, huh?"

"Well, a minute," I protested, "if you've forgotten those two lugs who carried me over, I haven't."

"Oh, ya," he muttered without too much interest. "Get down to the lab before bus time and look over the pictures, huh? We'll pick 'em up."

The squad car had stopped in front of my apartment house and he opened the car door. "See you around some time, huh? And so it moved away from the curb, I could hear Lieutenant Morrison call in Police Headquarters again.

I started toward the building until I saw the detective's car turn the corner and disappear, then I stopped, reversed myself and

walked quickly down the street toward the nearest all-night tank.

The first third rays of dawn were probing for a soft spot in the black surface of the night when I turned up the steps of the City Hospital. The nurse at the desk thumbed her register in response to my urgent question.

"Finn Skeldon?" I nodded. "Here it is," she said and she looked surprised. "She was discharged."

"That's impossible."

She fixed me with a reproving eye and her manner was as stiff as her starched white uniform. "Treated for cuts and bruises and discharged," she read, "and if there is anything else, mister . . ."

But I didn't stop to hear. I ran for the nearest telephone booth and dialed Steve's number. After a while the operator came on the line.

"They do not answer, sir," her mechanical voice told me.

"Keep trying, keep trying!"

She did, but it was useless. Steve didn't answer his telephone—and that was when my throat got dry and panic slipped into my belly like cold steel. The merry-go-round upstairs was whirling madly again and I could see the brass ring but no matter how many times I grabbed for it, it eluded my grasping fingers.

The New Paltz Hotel . . . the cross country tour . . . a twenty-dollar bill, and a shiny blade. Keep easy, Mitch, Harry, hurry, don't stop now—there's the brass ring. Grab it, Mitch, go on, try just once more!

My brain was racing furiously and frantically I refilled a Max powder on a lapel . . . my lapel . . . mine . . . a twenty-dollar bill and a shiny blade. I had it . . . the brass ring . . . it was in my grasp!

When I finally found Steve he was at the Metropolitan Garage on West 10th Street. The top of the bus was packed solid with hard instruments; he was just climbing down.

"It wasn't suicide, Steve," I blurted out like water overflowing. "Nick was murdered . . . like Sam, he was murdered!"

HE looked startled and a little scared. "I don't understand. The Lieutenant said . . ."

"He was wrong, Steve, he slipped up. He didn't see what I saw. The



knife was pointing the wrong way! If Nick killed himself, the blade would have been pointing away from his body and toward it. A suicide would never grasp a knife in that position. He was murdered and the killer put the knife in his palm . . . the wrong way!"

"You're clever, Mitch," the orchestra leader muttered. "You really are."

"I saw his wallet, too, Steve. My twenty was in it, but I didn't see your hundred . . . the hundred you said he took from you when he confessed."

Steve's hand came out of his pocket . . . the knife was just on his and ugly as all the others I'd seen.

"Don't make me kill you, too, Mitch—don't! You're my friend, Mitch, please don't make me do it!"

"Why? Steve, why?"

"You're my friend, Mitch, you'll understand! Remember how I helped you after your accident, remember?"

Remember! How could I ever forget! Just like I remembered how it had happened. Not that I'd ever blamed him for it, it wasn't really his fault. My fingers just happened to be in the bus door when he had slammed it shut. Remember?

"Listen to me. When this tour is over, I'm through. I'll be rich, do you hear? I'll go to South America, I'll . . . I'll never come back here again. You can have the band, Mitch, like yours, I give it to you."

"What are you saying, Steve? How will you be rich?"

"He went on as if he didn't hear me. 'It was small stuff indeed, but this is big. This is the clean-up, Mitch.' His head moved meaningfully. 'And not even you can stop me. He was greedy,' he went on. 'He was Dick.'"

"Dick?" I exclaimed. "You killed the other drummer, too?"

My stomach was a weak thing and my legs were jelly.

"I had to, Mitch," he said almost apologetically and he answered my unspoken question. "Nick was a fool. He didn't know anything—he just was handy, that's all. Nick was my ally, Mitch."

"And the new drummer?" I queried softly. "You phased him after you killed Dick, didn't you?"

He was grinning at me so I kept asking. "You had to have a drummer, didn't you, Steve? You



"... We're fighting in Melbourne tomorrow . . . in Canton on Wednesday . . . Sydney, Thursday . . . Newcastle, Friday . . . Maybe we can help you out next week . . ."

were the one who called him and told him it was Joe, didn't you?"

He didn't have to answer because suddenly I saw—I saw a lot of things. I saw the white face powder on Nick's lapel again, white face powder that wasn't face powder at all and I knew . . . at last I knew!

The orchestra leader moved toward me. "Are you my friend, Mitch? Don't make me kill you, I don't want to, Mitch." But he kept advancing toward me and that knife looked long and very sharp.

"Drop it, Henko!" and a hard voice—Morrison's voice.

I heard the knife hit the cement

floor with a clattering sound and suddenly the garage was swarming with cops, cops with guns, cops with handcuffs. I waited until Steve was out of sight, then I climbed up on the roof of the bus and threw the beam drum to the floor.

It was heavy, heavier than it should have been and as it hit the ground it split open; it split very wide open and two of Morrison's men were busy then, picking up the dozens of little packets of snow-white powder that some men call their snuff box.

I packed out the photos of the two maps who had got wind of the load of narcotics that Steve was carrying on his projected tour of the country, and I left.

It was about 10 a.m. when I reached Lee Fuller by telephone. I'd already got a new drummer and a new piano player—all I needed now was a new big singer.

"You've got until noon to be packed and sitting in the bus in the Metropolitan Garage on West 118th Street, baby," I said.

"What? What did you say?"

"Mitch Brown's Orchestra is leaving at twelve noon on a cross-country tour," I said. "I need a thumb—a jet-headed thumb. How about it, honey?"

"Oh, Mitch," she whispered. "Yes, Brown, Lee, baby." I said into the microphone, "I forgot to ask you . . . can you really sing?"



THE CHARMER WAS A KILLER

Continued from page 1

BACK in a ravine in New Jersey a woman was returning from the dead. Schmidt had been careless in not making sure he had done a really good job on Mrs. Schmidt that afternoon. Late at night, on a ledge on the cliff-like side of the ravine, she recovered consciousness. Although she was tormented with pain, she began a laborious climb, inch by inch she dragged herself up with grits and bushes until she finally lay gasping on her stomach on the trunk. She could do no more. Unconsciousness enveloped her.

Not until the next day did Mrs. Schmidt again open her eyes. She was in a hospital bed. She was still a very sick woman, but she made an effort to answer questions put to her by the police.

From the taxi-driver and railway officials, the missing husband was traced to Philadelphia. There his trail vanished. A special squad of detectives failed to find any Hermann Schmidt at a hotel or lodging house—such, of course, was not surprising as he had assumed the new identity of Emil Braun.

The neighbors filled in interesting details of Schmidt's past for the police. He had arrived in Lakewood as an immigrant from Germany only about 18 months before. With him were his wife, Anita, and a servant girl named Margareta Berenich.

Schmidt soon got a position at his trade of jewellery repair. He was hard-working and ambitious and in his spare time manufactured valuable items of imitation jewellery in a small workshop he set up in the basement of his house.

Suddenly Mrs. Schmidt disappeared. He reported that she had deserted him and run away to join an old flame in New York. Shortly he added the information that she had divorced him.

He did not miss her as he was apparently well cared for by the housemaid, Margareta—as cared for that group developed that their relationship was no longer that of master and servant.

Then Margareta also disappeared. Schmidt had his usual ready answer for queries. He told all the curious that she had gone away to take a factory job in New York.

Only a few days later, a New Mrs. Schmidt took up residence in the house. This was the woman he had tried to dispose of in the car over the edge of the ravine.

The second Mrs. Schmidt revealed that she had 1,200 dollars and a valuable collection of jewellery when she married Schmidt five months before. He had persuaded her to withdraw the cash from the bank and place it with the jeweller in a vault. Detectives showed her the box they had found at the house. It was empty.

SCHMIDT (as Emil Braun) married Irma Fiedlman. He had contacted her through a matrimonial advertisement and had corresponded with her all through his five months of matrimony with the second Mrs. Schmidt.



Two days later they arrived in Detroit, where Schmidt had already rented a furnished cottage on Glenview Avenue in the suburb of Highland Park. They moved in, and as usual he took a job in a city jeweller's shop and did side line work at home.

After about eight months, Braun informed the few tradespeople not to call any more as they were moving. He left late one night in December, 1934, per the usual tactics.

Some neighbors who "happened to be watching" noticed that he departed alone. There was no car left behind at the house.

As before, Schmidt had a new marriage partner and identity all lined up to replace the previous one. A few days after he left the Detroit house, he arrived at another rented residence on Oakdale Boulevard in the small town of Royal Oak, Michigan.

His new wife was a neat, stylish woman in her mid-thirties. Her new name was George Roloff.

A few months later, the United States entered World War I against Germany. Numbers of people in Royal Oak, as in thousands of other communities through the country, began to grow suspicious of the neighbors of German birth who lived amongst them.

They watched George Roloff. They had noticed before by the lights burning that he worked in his basement until late every night. Almost immediately after America entered the war, however, he carefully posted newspapers over the

windows and they could no longer see inside.

Another suspicious development they noted was the sight of clouds of dense black smoke billowing out of Roloff's chimney for several nights soon after the declaration of war.

Several neighbors decided to report Roloff and his queer goings on to the local sheriff, C. H. P. Green, at the country seat at Pontiac. Green agreed that the smoke could come from the burning of documents while a spy did not want to fall into the hands of his enemies.

As a result, on April 17, 1917, a squad of special officers of the Department of Justice accompanied Sheriff Green to Roloff's house to interrogate him.

The smiling, courteous man who opened the door identified himself as Roloff and invited them inside. He introduced them to Mrs. Roloff, who was busy at some domestic task which she did at home to add to the family income.

Roloff had no objection to being questioned. He admitted he was German, having arrived in America in November, 1913. But to think he was engaged in spying, he declared, was ridiculous.

To prove his loyalty, Roloff produced papers showing that he had that day started work in a local munitions factory, having temporarily abandoned his non-productive trade of jeweller.

The officers asked permission to search the house and Roloff unflinchingly agreed. They went diligently from room to room but uncovered nothing to suggest any spying activities.

There was a furnace in the basement. Sheriff Green inspected it

and found it had recently been cleared out. Reist was told about the same smoke men coming out the chimney by the neighbors. He said he had been burning all piles of rubbish left behind by the previous tenant.

Another officer pointed to three lawn suitcases standing together in the basement. Reist explained they belonged to a young woman who lived in the country. She was shortly to marry a friend of his who had asked him to store her luggage until after the wedding and he found an apartment for them.

The police combed the bags and found them full of pretty, lacy undergarments.

As far as Sheriff Green and the officers were concerned, the case was closed.

Nearly a month passed, and the attention of Sheriff Green was again drawn to George Reist. On the afternoon of May 14, he received a visit from a woman who kept a boarding house in Detroit, which was not far from Royal Oak.

She reported that on February 2, an attractive young woman named Augusta Steinbach had arrived to take a room. She told the landlady that she was a governess from New York. She had come to Detroit to marry a man named Herman Neugebauer, with whom she had been corresponding.

Rather truthfully, Augusta, who

was an open-faced, confiding and seemingly unprejudiced girl, explained that her Herman had not been at the station to meet her. The landlady tried to console her and suggested that she contact the missing fiance at the address to which she had been writing.

Augusta explained that Herman was rather a wanderer. He kept changing his room and for convenience he had used the address of a friend whose corresponding with her. The friend's name was George Reist, and he lived in Royal Oak.

The landlady telephoned Reist. He was solicitous and helpful. He said he would contact Neugebauer.

Within five minutes Neugebauer was on the line talking to his supposed fiancee. He made an appointment to meet her that night at a restaurant in Detroit.

Augusta went off to see the man she was engaged to marry but had not yet seen. The romance until then had been solely by correspondence.

She returned to the boarding house that night, well satisfied with Neugebauer. They planned to be married on March 17, which gave them plenty of time to find a house.

House, however, seemed hard to get. Weeks passed. On March 10, Augusta told the landlady she was going to move in with her fiance's friends, Mr. and Mrs. George Reist, in Royal Oak. It would be more

economical until she found somewhere to live with Herman.

Augusta sent word to New York to have the luggage which she had left there forwarded to Reist's address. She packed her bag and took a taxi from the boarding house out to Royal Oak.

The landlady told Sheriff Green that was the last she had seen of Augusta Steinbach.

WHILE staying with her, Augusta had written regularly to a devoted friend in New York, a girl named Agnes Downcock with whom she had worked for years. After Augusta had left the boarding house, a wedding present arrived for her from Agnes.

The landlady took it out to the Reist address in Royal Oak. She found Mrs. Reist working on the lawn. When she asked about Augusta Steinbach the woman showed surprise. She said she knew no one of that name and she was certainly not staying in her house.

This was incomprehensible to the landlady. She went to the railway and confirmed that Augusta's luggage had been sent from New York. Officials assured her that the bags had been delivered to the Reist house.

The landlady was debating what to do the next day when she received a visit from an entitled George Reist. He told her his wife had made a mistake. She had been away visiting friends for a few



"I just love those nice feet shoes!"



"Take up, Mr. Schaffer . . . Time for your sleeping pill."

days and did not know Augusta Steinbeck had moved in. He had quarreled with her father. As a result Augusta had left, saying she was returning to New York.

Her baggage had arrived, but after a few days she had a violent quarrel with her father. As a result Augusta had left, saying she was returning to New York.

Believing this story, the Detroit landlady returned the wedding present to Agnes Domanecki. But Agnes wrote saying that something was wrong. She had not seen her friend, and she could not believe Augusta was in New York without contacting her.

Sheriff Green promised to investigate. He was suspicious of Rolof. Augusta Steinbeck had supposedly returned to New York soon after March 10, when she moved to the Rolof house. Yet, when he searched the house during the spy investigation on April 17, her bags were still there.

Rolof again greeted the Sheriff effusively when he called. Asked about Herman Neugebauer, he admitted knowing him but did not know his present whereabouts. He said he lived in furnished rooms in Detroit but changed his address frequently and was a "rather shiftless fellow."

The Sheriff wanted to know when Rolof had last seen him. He

said about the middle of the previous month. The girl Neugebauer was to marry had become disappointed and returned to New York.

Questioned about the bags, Rolof said they had been sent on to Augusta Steinbeck in New York. She had written to him after she got back, asking him to do so. He produced a letter from her, postmarked New York, giving an address on East 43rd Street, where he was to send them.

Satisfied, Sheriff Green departed. He was convinced Augusta Steinbeck was safe in New York. He wrote to her friend, Agnes Domanecki, that Augusta could probably be found at the address Rolof had given.

Three months later Green received a letter from Agnes Domanecki. It explained she was still searching for Augusta. The address sent her had proved to be merely a furniture storage warehouse. Her friend's bags were there waiting for her. But of Augusta Steinbeck herself no one had seen any sign. She switched her campaign back to the New York police. So insistent was she that at last Captain Cornelius Williams of the Homicide Division was assigned to investigate.

Williams contacted Sheriff Green, who promised to put a man on the case. Then Green died suddenly. The investigation was pigeon-

holed in the turmoil in his office until a successor was appointed. It was April 10, 1915 before the new Sheriff, Charles Cross was briefed on all the details of the Augusta Steinbeck disappearance. As the case was primarily the responsibility of the Royal Oak authorities, Sheriff Cross agreed to send two men immediately to New York to make inquiries about Augusta from that end.

Daphne Gilkopic and Cryderman, who were selected for the task first interviewed Agnes Domanecki. She told them how she and Augusta had arrived in America together 16 years before how they worked together as servants in various homes. In 1912 Agnes had married; she was not satisfied she wanted to be married, have children and a home of her own. She began to answer matrimonial advertisements.

Finally she had announced in March, 1917, that she was going to Detroit to marry Herman Neugebauer, with whom she had been corresponding. She had said farewell to Agnes and departed with her 1,000 dollar savings.

The police showed Agnes the letter which Rolof had said he received from her and which directed him to forward her baggage to New York. The girl declared it was not her friend's writing.

At the storage warehouse, the three bags still waited for Augusta.

Police opened them. Agnes and the contents had definitely belonged to Augusta, but numbers of things, including jewelry and furs, were missing.

The investigation switched to the newspaper in which Augusta had first read the matrimonial advertisement of Herman Neugebauer. Clarke remembered that Neugebauer had run a number of such advertisements with them.

They produced correspondence in which he had ordered the playing of the advertisement and making money for his post. In them he had given his address as "C. G. Rolof, 4 Oakdale Boulevard, Royal Oak, Michigan".

Officers of the Immigration Service were called on to assist. They could find no record of Herman Neugebauer or George Rolof ever entering the country. Plainly there was something wrong there. Rolof was certainly a German who had been resident in America only a few years.

The investigators scoured at a dead end. Then clerks at the newspaper office described other letters in their files ordering the insertion of various matrimonial advertisements—and which were in the same handwriting as those received later from Herman Neugebauer.

They were signed either H. Schmidt or Emil Braun. The Group letters gave an address in Glencade Avenue, Detroit. The Schmidt letters came from Lakewood, New Jersey.

Again the names were checked by the Immigration Service. They could find no Braun as having entered the country—but there was an entry under the name of Heinrich Schmidt. It disclosed he was born in Berlin in 1894. Rolof was given of his occupation and his occupation of jeweler.

A photograph showed clearly the man who Braun called himself George Rolof.

Mrs. Schmidt, who was living in New York, accompanied the detectives back to Royal Oak to "put the finger" on Rolof.

Squads of detectives, meanwhile, proceeded to the residence occupied by Herman Schmidt (in Lakewood, New Jersey) and by Emil Braun on Glencade Avenue, Detroit.

In the grounds of the Schmidt house was an old dilapidated well. It was filled with rubbish, but the detectives carefully sifted it and came upon the remains of a human body sufficed to quicklime. There were also a woman's shoe and fragments of bone.

In the Braun house the detectives found a freshly cemented floor-slab in the basement. They removed the cement and dug beneath. They unearthed the decomposed body of a slim and pretty red-head—the former Irene Pelikane.

Police confronted George Rolof with the alleged Mrs. Schmidt, whom he believed dead. At first he tried to deny his guilt, but when the women were brought in, still showing the effects of his murder attempt, he broke down and made a full confession.

He admitted killing four women—the first Mrs. Schmidt, the maid Margaret, Irene Pelikane, and Augusta Stenback. Augusta's remains were found distributed about the garden of the Royal Oak home. She had been burned in the furnace, causing the black stoker seen by the neighbors.

It was believed, however, that Schmidt's actual tally was much greater. In a safety-deposit box he had secreted \$2,000 dollars in cash. There were probably other victims for him to have accumulated as much.

Mrs. Rolof was questioned and released. Doubtless she would have been the next victim. She had escaped longer than the others because she had managed to hand over her savings of \$300 dollars. A few days before his arrest, however, she had at last given in and put the money in a joint account.

After his confession on April 23, 1934, Heinrich Schmidt (which was his real name) was locked up in the Royal Oak Jail. That night a guard noticed him kneeling on the floor beside his bunk. He thought he was going to pray and nodded approvingly. "If ever a man needed prayer he does," he mused to himself.

But Schmidt was not thinking of prayer. From his crouching position he suddenly leaped upright and brought his head crashing against a steel railing of the bunk.

So he committed suicide. The blow fractured his skull. He was dead before a hastily summoned doctor could save him.

BATTLE OF THE CRANKY CAMELS

(Continued on page 9)

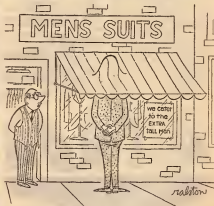
As the camels pushed down into an abyss, the color of death reached the nostrils of the man long before the grisly sight revealed itself.

The buzzards swooped and past into the air with laboriously flapping wings, driven off by the noise of the caravan moving into the circle of what had once been vegetation. Now they were charred, cold stumps, and the men and women who had been surprised by the vicious Mohaves were unrecognizable as humans.

He looked at Sam and saw that the face of the Westerner was suitably grim. "A thousand, at least," Sam said. "A thousand misdeeds done on that point."

Henry said nothing. He concentrated on the rope veins dangling from the iron ring to the right nostril of the white camel. He wondered if there might not be another place up the wash reserved for the death of his men, a festival site for Mohave men and women who liked the look of white flesh beneath their sharp knives. A thousand Mohaves. Twenty-five to one.

All day the men were aware of the cloud of dust in the east, the high altipicary cloud that marked the trail of the Indians. The Mohaves were moving, perhaps joined by the Havasupai. Horas were dragging travois across the wash, urged on by the women, while the bucks circled on their paces. The



"See anything in the window you like?"

whole tribe was moving into a better position to prey on wagon trains moving toward the gold fields to the west.

At 2 o'clock in the afternoon, Bishop noticed that the wash had begun to flatten out somewhat, and that they were moving into a grassy, rolling area watered by a creek, and surrounded by a ring of hills. A series of ridges blocked their view so that they could not see more than a mile, but the dust cloud had grown so immense that there was little doubt that the Indians were moving across the Mohave Wash a few miles ahead. Bishop held his hand up for a halt while the camels were still within the cover of an arroyo, then he turned to Sam Willis.

"There isn't much choice," Sam said, looking at the rolling grass ahead of them. "Babe's on the other side of that river of Indians somewhere. We either get to cross or go back."

Bishop frowned and ran his hand over the stubble on his face. Looking at his men, he saw their youthful faces watching him, waiting for him to tell them what to do. But as he looked at them, he knew this was one decision he could make only for himself.

"What are our chances of getting past the Mohaves?" he said to Sam.

The scout shrugged and bit into a quid of tobacco. "Maybe one in a hundred."

Bishop looked back at the men. The camels were restless now, and some of them, feeling the tension in the air, had begun to growl. "There are a thousand bucks out there," Bishop said slowly. "You saw what happened to that wagon train." His throat was suddenly dry. "I don't expect you to risk your necks for me. Any of you that want to go back can leave now. There won't be any hard feelings."

It was only as he started around the edge of the flat that he realized all of the men were still with him. The only chance was to keep moving now, to try to skirt the edge of the Mohave army. It would be too risky to proceed on foot, for none of the men were experienced enough as camel riders to climb steep rocky mountains in less than

five minutes, and a delay of one minute might very well mean the difference between life and death. Bishop's hand stayed close to the stock of his rifle, and his tongue flicked over his lips as the afternoon crawled by. In another hour, they could hear the sounds of the Indians in the distance, the yelping of the dogs and the whinnying of the horses. Pulling his rifle, Bishop turned the whole camel to the southeast, away from the grayish flat. This was a terrible mistake now. Perhaps the Mohaves would have sprung out to the rear of their expedition. Perhaps the Mohave dogs would catch the unobscured scent of the camels and lead a barking path to the 40 men who were ill-equipped enough to attempt to cross the Mohave country.

Then Bishop called another halt, and he felt the cold perspiration peeping out on his forehead. Looking down from atop the camel he saw that a ravine blocked their path to the south east, a murderous crevice 30 feet deep with rock walls so sheer that even the sure-footed camels could not navigate them. Bishop smiled at Sam.

"Looks like nature doesn't want to co-operate," he said.

A nebulous plan began to take shape in Bishop's mind. He beckoned to El Jolly and the Nile Syrian guided his camel to the great dromedary, a puzzled look on his brown face.

Bishop felt a sudden attraction toward the camel driver. "Hi," he said, "how fast can these camels run?"

The Syrian scratched the side of his head. "Pretty fast, maybe," he said in a hoarse accent.

"Fast enough to outrun a horse?"

El Jolly shook his head, meaning no.

Bishop took a deep breath to strengthen his nerve. "I say we take the Mohaves head on."

For a moment, Sam's face was perplexed, then he grinned and gestured to the ground. "You're crazy," he said, "crazy as hell."

Bishop wiped his palms on the high pomel of the saddle. "Sure, I'm crazy," he said, "but I don't see any other way."

"Might work," Sam's grin faded.

"If it doesn't, we'll die quick. That's our consolation."

Bishop's mind began to calculate. "You suppose the Mohaves know we're around?"

"I doubt it," Sam said. "They probably know Babe's coming from the east with a pretty good-sized bunch of loot. There's not many trains moving from the west. If they saw our fire last night, they must figure a one-fire bunch isn't big enough to meet with or we would have had 'em on our backs before now."

It was a crazy plan. All of the men knew it and yet none of them backed down. It was a crazy plan that could only have been conceived by a man atop a camel. In an unbridled mixture of Old World beasts with their New World masters. Perhaps the sight of 40 thundering camels would scatter the Indian ranks enough for a quick dash through them. If they could make the head of the wash and get into the hills, they might be able to set up some sort of defence.

Bishop frowned as the camels moved back into the wash. There were too many things dependent on "he" in the scheme, and one bad break would mean death for the whole force. The camels moved into a straight line. Bishop pulled out his rifle and checked the breech, then he looked down the row of men. Some of the faces were twisted into forced grimaces of enthusiasm, the rest displayed their fear openly. There were four men who could face almost certain death without some quinine. He felt his own blood pumping faster through his body. His face hot, his hands cold.

He gave the signal. The line of camels began to move forward, slowly at first, gaining speed as the men clung precariously to the swaying saddles.

The line swept over a rise and Bishop's eyes narrowed at the sight of an immense line of Indians stretched out on the flat by the creek. The horses pulling the freights kicked up immense clouds of dust.

The squares walked alongside, yelling at the horses and at the kids that swarmed around the moving animals. In the miles whistled the Mohave warriors, mounted on their ponies, half obscured by the whirling dust. There were at least a thousand of them. Then, as if by magic, a sudden change swept over the swarming Indians. A sharp-eyed square spotted the camels and screamed out a shrill warning. Bishop saw the warriors wheeling into position. The dust shot out of the camels, their fangs bared. And immediately behind them came staggered lines of warriors, whipping their ponies, waving their lances, yelling as they nocked arrows to their bows.

Bishop pulled his rifle up and began to fire, trying to adapt his shooting to the pitch of the loping camel. Around him, pairs of snaky arms from the rifles of the camel riders, and one or two of the men had begun to utter half-hearted yells. The wave of Indians swept



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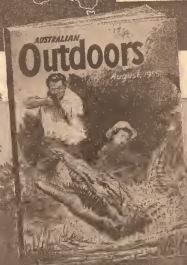
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become the first human to beat the 4 minute mile barrier.

Australian John Landy, within weeks, reduced the record to 3:58.

The Vancouver middle distance race was correctly billed as the "Mile of the Century". Landy and Hammer went to the start, each with his own strategy to follow. The Australian was determined to run the Englishman "into the ground". Hammer's plan was to run, at level pace, to clock 4 miles on a second or so above or below. After 360 yards in the race, world-record-holder, John Landy, dashed into the lead. He held his position for the first three laps in 58.3, 49.0 and 50.3, and heard the final lap bell ring when he had been running for 3 miles 58.4 sec. At one stage he was 12 yards ahead of Hammer but the latter was only two and a half yards behind him when they swung into the final straight. As the two mighty milers turned into the final stretch, the excitement of the crowd was

at fever pitch. Landy risked a glance over his inside shoulder. At that precise moment Hammer stormed past him on the outside and went on to win by five and a half yards in 3 mins. 53.7 sec. Landy also beat four minutes.

Only a few minutes after the remarkable mile race, the crowd of 35,000 was treated to one of the grandest exhibitions of British chivalry and courage ever presented in public. It was the finish of the grueling marathon race. Two hours sixteen minutes after the start of the 26 miles 385 yards road event, 35-year-old Englishman, Sam Peters, came racing into the stadium, at the head of the field. In a starkly brave effort to reach the finishing tape, he collapsed at least a dozen times but continued his self-sacrificing struggle. For 18 minutes, in deadly silence, onlookers watched the spectacle. There was a sigh of relief when he was grovelling on his hands and knees with 180 yards to go. The event was won by

Joseph McGhee of Scotland. Englishman Jim Peters did not win an Empire Games medal but, beyond doubt, he was the undying respect of sport lovers in the Vancouver Stadium and throughout the world.

AT Sydney Stadium on the evening of March 20, this year, Scot, Peter Keenan, struck a series of powerful blows on behalf of British boxing prestige when he easily outpointed Australian, Bobby Turpin, to win the British Empire Bantam-weight Boxing Title. He was in complete charge of the fight from beginning to end and at no stage was he in the slightest danger of defeat. The Australian was game but the Scot was brilliant. With clever footwork and unceasing defence Keenan jabbed, hooked, fipped and ceased with corkscrew precision. Keen judges left the stadium, confident that the visitor was a potential world champion.

On July 10, 1934, the Middle-weight Boxing Champion of the World, "Sugar" Ray Robinson, stepped up to Great Britain's 22-year-old Randolph Turpin, at London's Earl's Court, in what was regarded by the experts as a sparring match for the champion. For 15 terrific rounds, the British boy outboxed, out-fought and outpunched the negro. That evening Turpin was a fighting artist. His strategy gained for him, and for Britain, a world title. Throughout the fight he ground Robinson in the early rounds, he pushed the more experienced champion around the ring, landing heavy left hooks and powerful blows in the head and body. Robinson was not able to attack; he could only defend himself. His wild swings missed Turpin by feet and the few body punches that he was able to smash through the challenger's defence seemed to have no effect. Robinson did more back-moving than he had done in any of his 150 fights.

In the 4th round Robinson threw a barrage of lefts and rights to the head but Turpin neatly stepped back out of range until the attack was spent. As soon as the negro paused for breath Turpin stepped in to punch with both hands. In the seventh round he opted a cut over Robinson's left eyebrow. By the time they had reached the thirteenth Robinson had realised that the only way he could retain his title was by a knockout. He crowded in, throwing terrific punches with either hand. Turpin was quicker and smarter and, not only did he keep out of harm's way but he continued to throw punishing punches until the final bell. As Turpin was overpowered, Middleweight Champion of the World, the huge crowd commenced an ovation that lasted for more than 10 minutes.

Turpin lost his title to Robinson in a return bout, but to Englishmen he is still their fighter who won the title. Another lad who is becoming British boxing stock is a young contender, Del Dower, of Aberystwyth. His home is a quiet, grimy mining village. Good judges of the glove game have blessed him to his fel-

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Joe Welschman of yesterday, Jimmy Wilde, who began his remarkable career almost fifty years ago. Dewar's first step to national boxing fame, was taken in 1943 when he won the nation's Amateur Boxing Association Flyweight title which earned him a trip to Helsinki for the Olympic Games. Over there, he dropped a close points decision to a Russian named Balakow, in the quarter-finals. In 1953 he turned professional and quickly purchased his way to the top. In March this year he won the European Flyweight Title from Russian Nargman Guseynov and turned out for Ireland a match with Eusebio Perez for the world's championship. It was his third title in three months, having previously won the British and Empire crowns. Dr Dewar's greatest ambition is to bring Jimmy Wilde's world title back to Wales.

In the sport of winning wheels, postwar England has produced a champion whose involvement is legendary wherever sportscraft ride cycles for prize money. Reg Harris is the winner of five world cycling championships. He had his first international success in Paris in 1947. That was when he won the amateur title. The story of Harris is a typical tale of a champion who overcomes difficulty. His war service in North Africa, included being blown out of a blazing tank. He was discharged on medical grounds. He had always loved cycling. He became British champion in 1944 and held the title for three successive years. In 1947 he became world amateur sprint champion. It was the first time since "Tiny" Johnson won the world championship in 1932, that the Union Jack had been hoisted to the mast based on such an occasion. In 1948 he was involved in a bad motor crash. He had a fractured spine and doctors said he would never ride his cycle again. He didn't believe them.

In the Olympic Games in London, 1948, he was automatically selected in the No. 1 position for the sprint. Unfortunately he entered three events—the 1,000 metres sprint, 1,000 metres time trial and 2,000 metres tandem. The hosts of the three events overstepped. British press attacked him for what they termed "his greediness". He failed in the first two events and did not start in the third.

Immediately after the Olympic fiasco, he became a professional. He won his first professional title in Copenhagen in 1950 and followed it by victory at Lige in 1950 and Milan in 1951.

In Cologne in August 1954, he proved himself to be the fastest rider and cleverest tactician on the cycling tracks of the world.

His income from bike racing is estimated at £10,000 per year. Whatever may be the results of Reg Harris's future cycling competition, his name will stand for many years among the elite recorded in professional cycling annals.

In the sphere of mechanized speed on wheels, a 25-years-old Englishman is being hailed as the

successor to Malcolm Campbell. Stirling Moss is a stocky, confident, young man with deep-set grey eyes and a breath-taking fearlessness on the track.

Stirling Moss graduated from the 500 cc. trials, where he won every big prize in the category. Up among the big-time Grand Prix drivers he out-drove the masters, such as Italy's Giuseppe Farina and Argentinian Juan Fangio. In 1950 he was declared Britain's "Driver of the Year." He was only 21. A series of European wins and records followed. Now he is acknowledged one of the best in the world. This year he signed a contract with Mercedes-Benz to drive their Grand Prix and Super Light Supercharged sports cars during 1955.

Another British road racing hero is Geoffrey Dimes, winner of the 250 cc. and 500 cc. world road race motor cycle championship.

It is a long time since a world champion swimmer was produced

by the British Isles. American coach, Matt Mann, suggests that "maybe it won't be long now, because a couple of his students splash their way into swimming news. The Warrington twins, of England, are at Michigan University, U.S.A. Swimming for Michigan University in a dual meet against Iowa University early this year, Jack Wardrop won the 220 yards freestyle in 2 mins. 5.4 secs, and Bert the 200 backstroke in 2 mins. 11.3 secs. In the 4 x 100 yards freestyle relay Bert returned 31.5 secs and Jack 34.1 secs. Jack is putting close to Ford Kenner's world record of 2 mins. 4.7 secs for the 220 yards.

Each year the ranks of British sport exponents produce an international class performer to remind the rest of the world that Britain is really accomplishing her national assignment—a comeback to pre-eminence in sport. After all, she invented most of it.

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FIGHTING MAN BOWS OUT

Continued from page 29

Punchy nodded and walked slowly away. He wanted to turn around then and tell Johnny a few things. He wanted to say, "Johnny, you're a horn fool. You don't know the score. You don't realize what they're doing to you, Johnny."

No, Johnny didn't know. Guys like Al and Punchy, and other guys, had to take the fall before Johnny's leather; they had to go down and keep their eyes shut and listen to the count, and watch the ref hold Johnny's hand up; and they had to do it again and again while Johnny's reputation got bigger and bigger, until Johnny was a coming boy and could be matched with the champ.

Punchy knew the ropes, remembered with every slap he took; every time his fat feet hit the pavement they jugged up another picture of what had been, could be for Johnny. Johnny being built up to take a fall so that one day the papers would scream, "He was good but he wasn't good enough." So that the fight fans would think the shiny champ was still at his peak, though they should have known that a man doesn't stay at his peak that long.

Yes, that was where Johnny fitted in — and Johnny didn't know it. Johnny, who was so anxious that it should all be on the level.

Mike, who was so anxious that it shouldn't be on the level. Nick saying, "You give us the same kind of fight Al would have given us."

Punchy only got paid for lying down. If he stayed on his feet he didn't get a penny. He couldn't jump off the twenty-four-round at Portland by staying on his feet. He wouldn't money for that. And Johnny couldn't stay married if he lay down, because then Johnny would think he was good and would carry right on until he was punchy, too. That girl Punchy had seen, she wouldn't want to stay married to Johnny.

Punchy spat. What the hell! He didn't know getting punch drunk made a guy that sentimental. If Johnny wanted to stay in the fight business, it was his fight. If he wanted to lose that nice girl and live on single-pas until he was smashed down to the truth, it was his choice. He wasn't the first guy. Maybe he wouldn't finish so fast, either. Maybe he'd finish like Punchy, with nearly enough dough to get to Portland. Maybe he'd come out of it all right by lying down when he couldn't get anything by standing up.

There were all sorts of ways of getting out even. Nick had his way, getting dough for other people's punchy. Punchy had his way, and so did Al. It was good enough for them. Why the hell wasn't it good enough for Johnny?

Fight-time Johnny looked fit. Clean and handsome and fit. He looked like a winner. Punchy knew and envied him that.

A nice guy, Punchy thought.

They went on fourth, after a type of four-rounders. He bowed to the genial press that greeted the announcement of the substitution, held his hands high, and gave them his gurgly grin.

In his corner, a couple of hours' seconds, and one of them said, "You're in big company tonight, Champ. The kid's a corner."

"I been in that company before," Punchy said.

"But not since the war. Don't go leading with your chin, both. Champ."

"These are the kind of guys I see," Punchy said. "This kind I can take."

They both got a laugh out of that. What do you do with a guy like Johnny? You come in low, under the left, and hook. He's on his toes, and moving, and when he gets first-dotted for a second you catch out. Hit on his toes and moving, you try to crop him, keep him off balance. You come in low, and hook.

Only that left of Johnny's. It was a lance. It was a spear. It was a sword. Cutting, bruising the head. And the short right he threw, from time to time—the right he saved, mostly. It was a weapon.

In the first round, Punchy tested that right in his mouth, and his head snapped back. Toward the end of the round, he felt it under the ear, and the buzzing was bad for a while.

On his stool, the talkative second said, "He's a cloud, isn't he? He's a hard man to hit."

"He's no prize, not in the ring," Punchy said.

"Okay, Champ. We'll see. Protect yourself."

Punchy shook his head, and his vision cleared a little, and he looked over at Johnny's midline. There was some spit. Not much, but some.

Balling in, and backing. Never looking up, just watching the feet, and keeping the hands inside, working away at the belt, trying to make it red.

Once, when Punchy rushed, there was nothing but ropes, and he got tangled for a second. And when he turned, looking for Johnny, the night whistled home.

The apex whistled, and the canvas burned his back.

Al never hit was notorious, and up at nine, but the rubber was in the legs and the vision of Johnny unclear. His groping hands found Johnny finally, and he wrestled out the round.

"You could quit, you know," the second said. "This isn't a life fight. How much are you supposed to take for the money?"

"Never quit yet," Punchy said. "The too old to learn. What round is it?"

"Fourth coming up. Later, maybe the day had."

"Isn't he silly," Punchy said. "I wondered if you could count, is all."

The fourth, and Johnny a ghost on legs of steel, moving around Punchy and spearing him with the left. The fourth, and Punchy pulled him into a corner. Finally, and pounded, again, at the belt. He

thought he could feel some way in Johnny.

The fifth, he seemed to find Johnny easier. He was getting weary, but he let Johnny carry him, and toward the end of the round Punchy stopped back and tried a wild, overhand right. It caught Johnny on the side of the jaw, and he went into the ropes. Panchy hit him twice as he came off.

The second said, "You strike me, Champ. You know more than I gave you credit for. The guy's change."

"He's a good boy," Panchy answered. "He's just in the wrong business."

He went out in the sixth, and met Johnny in ring center. There wasn't so much spring in Johnny's legs, and there was a bewildered look in his young eyes.

Panchy seemed to have forgotten about the three stiff jabs he'd handed Johnny at the end of the round. He went back to work on the bally, digging at that young strength.

Johnny retreated, the left trying to stay up and moving, but Johnny was arm-weary, and his legs were lead, in the middle of the round, Panchy stumbled backward from the light left to his head.

Johnny, over-armed, came in with the right ready.

Panchy threw the haymaker. It was a solid buff-axe, and the shock of it travelled Panchy's arm all the way to the shoulder. He turned, and went to a neutral corner.

He was still standing there when they counted Johnny out.

In the dressing-room, Nick came over to tell him, "I don't think you'll ever fight here again, Panchy."

Panchy smiled at him. "Johnny, then? Get out of my way, Nick. I'm in a hurry to get home."

The room was quiet. He could just hear the music from the radio next door. Then, a little later, he heard Johnny's feet on the stairs. They were moving heavily and slowly.

He heard his door open, and her voice. "Darling, what's—?"

"Bad night," he said. "It took an old-timer to show me the fight, baby."

"Johnny—you lost, but it—"

"I lost, baby. I lost my last fight."

"Because you promised me? Johnny Gallagher, it's what you you want—"

"Honey, there's only one thing I want, and that's you. Tomorrow I go to see the people at the Corner. I'm a little slow to learn, baby, but I learned tonight."

In his room Panchy looked at himself in the mirror. And then he looked at the empty tobacco-tin, and remembered the forty pounds that had been there, the Portland money. Al Deever had his Portland money now.

He couldn't quite figure out why he'd done it, but, somehow, in his mind, it was tied up with Louise.

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CODE OF THE FANG

Continued from page 40:

Mayak now darted in, snuffing smoke-bang from her nostrils, and seized the hilt of the whips, and started moving them along as fast as their armature legs would carry them. There was no chance now of her gaining the safety of the side. She was turning her brood on toward the creek, to the south.

Olak had not rejoined her. He was swinging around a belt of brush, and now he poised himself at his full height, to glare at a shuddering black wolf-shape. This was Uam. As the fire demons roared and quaked at his back, Olak raised his muscle and gave out a husky wail. The black wolf-shed skin spun.

Uam whipped slightly to one side at the White Phantom's throat. He spun and slashed with his terrible fangs, which caught Olak in the throat.

Breathed with blood, the white one rushed again. He snapped and whipped back. Uam reared back.

Outlining deep throat-sounds, the White Phantom hurled himself in. His gaping jaws drove, and his fangs buried themselves in Uam's throat.

The big black wolf was strong. He put all his muscular strength to service now as he watched his rack from side to side. He suddenly fell, taking Olak with him. The throat-hold was lost, and for a few seconds Olak was hard pressed.

He caught the black by a forepaw and exerted all his strength in a sharp twist of his head. A bone snapped like the crack of a fire-tormented timber.

Uam buckled. He was stumbling forward when Olak whirled and cut his hamstring.

Olak seized a yowling stranger and whirled, to start a dancing patch of scrub brush, then on to the creek flat, where he laid the cub.

As the grim red tide bore ruthlessly down, to reach its climax in the heavy matted dry grasses of the creek flat, Mayak and her brood cowered in the shallows of the creek, as wind rained flame over their backs.

Olak swam back and forth in a pool upstream. Now he returned to his family, and muzzled first one whelping after another. Above the roar of the fire there came sudden, sharp crashes. The entrapped stream to westward had broken free.

Olak whimpered softly as he raised his head to catch the best of raindrops. . . . Now he turned the whelps to the far bank, to soft hush in cover of heavy willows, where Mayak joined them.

Olak took himself off to a knoll, where he stood and listened to the hiss of rain from the fire, and watched the clouds of steam replace the black smoke.

Now he thrust up his head and peered out a long wall which declared his victory—victory not only over the fire gods, but over his hated enemy Uam, the code-breaker, whose scorched body lay in the smoke-obscured brush to northward.

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NEXT MONTH in ADAM

SPORT

Al Castella, the singing wrestler, tossed a coin. It fell heads, so he was disqualified in each of his first 24 contests. **THE ROUGHEST MEANIE IN WRESTLING**, is the title and Ray Mitchell wrote the story. **THE GIRL WITH THE SKATES OF GOLD** is the story of Sooja Hanis. Sydney George Elori is the author.

CRIME

The Ruxton killing in England was disholically clever. The identification of the victim and the apprehension of the killer were among the greatest feats of detection in history. James Haddock tells of Ruxton in **FOUND IN THE DEVIL'S BEEP TUN**. Another fast crime is **WHEN THE TONGUE WARRED**. It tells of a Chinese girl who drove men to murder and madness in a feud that took a toll of 250 victims. The woodchuck is **KILLER COMES HOME**.

ADVENTURE

If you like pirate stories, **THE POISON FIFTE** is a true account of a man who took charge of a ship by poisoning the crew. Two adventure fictions are **THAT BLACK DEVIL, ZASA**, a story of circus life, and **SAPAHU OUTLAW**.

WESTERN

Three Westerns this month — one fact and two fiction stories. **TREX FOR THE LAW** tells a true story of the Kiowas. **MY GIRL'S BROTHER IS GUILTY** has all the Western flavor, while **APACHE SHADOWS** is a story about Indians and a white scout.

Continued from page 54:

Laura raised her head and looked at him. It seemed that she looked a long time. It wasn't until they heard the sound of horses outside that she spoke.

"All right," she said.

Tall Cameron took a deep breath and let it out. That was the only sound in the room. The sound of horses outside got louder and a man shouted, "Fisher, are you in there?"

It was Randall's voice. Laura got up from the table, went to the door and opened it. Noah stood behind his daughter, and Tall Cameron pushed back against the far wall in the shadows of the room.

TALL CAMERON had been right.

Laura told it just the way he had told her and the man believed it. The horses reared as the men pulled them around to the north. The marshal's thick voice said, "Don't worry, me'm, we'll get him all right."

Laura didn't turn around. She stood in the doorway until the sound of the horses faded; then she started up the steps. "I'll get the horse, Father. I'll be back in a little while."

Noah didn't argue. He watched his daughter as she went up the steps and disappeared in the direction of the creek. Then he turned around to look at Tall Cameron—and the big, ugly muscle of a 40.

Cameron's face was drained white. He squeezed that gun in his big hand, the hammer back. His mouth twitched. That was his first movement. He began to shake. The gun hand wavered and he aimed the hammer down and put the .45 back in his belt. He wiped the back of his hand across a wet face and shrilly spoke.

"I would have killed her," His voice was dead. "If she hadn't done like I said I would kill her." He pulled out a handkerchief and mopped his face. "I never actually took myself to be a criminal before. I always figured I was helping my people, and the men I killed were

men that needed to be killed. I guess killing gets to be a habit, and when you've done enough of it it gets to be the easiest way to settle your problems. Anybody that gets in your way. Even people you love.

Noah didn't say anything. He stood there with his back to the door and looked at that strange man. Suddenly they were he was, a strange man—to himself and everybody else. A man who was his best friend in his holster, a man who thought with the steel and powder he held in his hand.

Time passed. It seemed a lot of time, but Noah couldn't be sure about that. He stood by the door and didn't move until he heard Laura out front with the big black.

There wasn't any talking. No good-byes. Tall Cameron pushed the horse over and climbed up.

The other horse came suddenly from behind the barn. Noah started to yell, but for some reason he couldn't. Spade Randall had his gun drawn. A faint little smile played around the corners of his mouth. Maybe Randall knew more about women than most men, or maybe it was just a gambler's hunch that made him wait there behind the barn while the rest of the posse rode off. Noah didn't know. When Cameron got even with him he rode out and the gun in his hand pointed.

Cameron jerked once and his horse whickered. That 40 appeared on his hand and created a look of great amazement came across Randall's face. He dropped his gun and looked feebly at his empty hand. Suddenly he grabbed at his stomach and doubled and fell from his saddle. He was dead before he hit the ground.

Spade Randall couldn't rise, not at that distance. But Randall, himself, would never fight again.

It had happened fast. Noah hadn't moved. Laura gaped once beside him, and he put his arm around her and pressed her face against his shoulder. There was no sound.

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